Bengaluru Tuesday, February 24, 2026 Pages 16 Vol 79 No 55 ₹7

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DH

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HC bench says no to urgent hearing

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Epstein fallout: UK's former US ambassador arrested P.11

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India unveils its first counter-terror policy

Govt's move focuses on attack prevention and swift response; stress also on countering cyber-attacks by hackers and nation states

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Union government on Monday unveiled the country's first-ever counter-terrorism policy, PRAHAAR, that calls for furthering collaboration among agencies, associating legal experts at every stage of investigation and addressing transnational challenges. It also aims at criminalising all terror acts and denying access to funds, weapons and safe havens to terrorists.

The nine-page document titled 'National Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy' by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said the "threat of state and non-state actors misusing drones and robotics for lethal purposes" remains an area of concern, even as "criminal hackers and nation states continue to target India through cyber-attacks".

It said India has been "on the target" of Al Qaeda and IS among others while handlers "from across the border" frequently use technologies like drones for facilitating terror in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. It acknowledged that disrupting terrorist efforts to access CBNRED (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, explosive, digital) material remains a challenge.

Commandos display counter-terrorism skills on the NSG Campus near Gurugram. PTI FILE

THREAT PROFILE	WAY FORWARD
Target of Al Qaeda, IS among others	Scope for further collaboration between agencies
Handlers from across border use latest tech, including drones	Legal regime need to be amended from time to time to address emerging challenges
Use of organised criminal networks for logistics, recruitment	Continual need for capacity building of counter-terrorism units
Use of encryption, dark web, crypto wallets	Associate legal experts at every stage of investigation
Misuse of drones, robotics	To continue to work for a comprehensive framework on international terrorism
Criminal hackers, nation states targeting through cyber-attacks	

The document said PRAHAAR is predicated on "prevention" of terror attacks to protect Indian citizens and interests, "responses" that are swift and proportionate to the threat posed, "aggregating" internal capacities for achieving synergy in a whole-of-government approach and "human rights and rule of law-based processes" for mitigation of threats.

It is also based on "attenuating" the conditions enabling terrorism, including radicalisation, "aligning and shaping" international efforts to counter terrorism and "recovery and resilience" through a whole-of-society approach.

The document made it clear that India "does not link terrorism to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation" despite a few countries in the region having "sometimes used terrorism as an instrument of state policy".

▸ Terror policy, Page 4

PRAHAAR

- **P** Prevention of terror attacks
- **R** Responses that are swift and proportionate
- **A** Aggregating internal capacities for achieving synergy in govt approach
- **H** Human rights and 'Rule of Law'-based processes
- **A** Attenuating conditions enabling terrorism
- **A** Aligning and shaping international efforts
- **R** Recovery and resilience through a whole-of-society approach

Air ambulance with 7 onboard crashes in Jharkhand

RANCHI, PTI: An air ambulance with seven people onboard to Delhi from Ranchi crashed in a forest near Simaria in Jharkhand's Chatra district on Monday, Ranchi airport Director Vinod Kumar said.

Search and rescue teams have been dispatched, but there was no immediate confirmation about casualties.

The crash occurred after the air ambulance took off from Ranchi airport at about 7.10 pm.

"An air ambulance from Ranchi with seven people onboard crashed near Simaria in Chatra district. The report of the crash was received from the state administration," Airport Director Kumar told *PTI*.

The ambulance had lost contact with air traffic control around 20 minutes after takeoff.

Inclement weather could be a reason behind the crash, but the actual reason will be ascertained only after a probe, Kumar added.

India advises its citizens to leave Iran

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Amid a large mobilisation of the US forces in West Asia by President Donald Trump, the Indian Embassy in Tehran has issued a fresh advisory asking Indian citizens in Iran to leave the country by "available means of transport, including commercial flights".

Details on Page 8

Will implement CCI order on data sharing: WhatsApp to SC

NEW DELHI, DHNS: WhatsApp LLC on Monday told the Supreme Court that it will implement the Competition Commission of India's order that asked it to give users a choice for sharing data with Meta Platforms Inc or other Meta firms.

A bench led by Chief Justice of India also sought a response from WhatsApp and its parent Meta Platforms on a plea for imposing a five-year ban on advertisements on WhatsApp, in view of a recommendation by the Competition Commission of India. WhatsApp sought to withdraw its application challenging the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) order that called for the enforcement of the CCI directions on requiring a user-consent-based framework for data sharing.

The court permitted WhatsApp and Meta Platforms to withdraw the applications on the issue.

However, it directed WhatsApp to file a compliance report on user-data-sharing directions before the CCI as required by NCLAT.

Senior counsel Kapil Sibal for WhatsApp said WhatsApp had filed an affidavit explaining its data-sharing practices and will implement NCLAT's directions. He submitted that WhatsApp would not press a stay of NCLAT's directions since it will comply with them by March 16.

State to frame policy to regulate digital content use by kids

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a step towards framing a policy on regulating digital content accessed by children, the Karnataka government has decided to constitute an expert committee.

The decision follows Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's statement at a recent meeting with university vice chancellors regarding a proposal to ban the use of mobile phones by children below 16 years.

Sources said the committee will comprise experts from the fields of education, medical, technical and mental health.

Officials from the department of school education and literacy will also be part of the panel.

"The committee is yet to be formed. Once it is formed, the terms of reference will be given to it. Based on the committee report/recommendation, the government will take a final call on imposing mobile ban, restricting social media and various digital content available on the internet which are not age-appropriate for children," said a source.

The expert committee will basically study the ill-effects of mobile phones on children's academics, physical and mental health, among others.

"Several stakeholders, including parents, child rights activists and the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, have requested the government to impose mobile ban and also regulate digital content for children," the source explained.

▸ Digital content, Page 4

SURGES AHEAD

Karnataka's bioeconomy hits $39 bn: Report

BENGALURU, DHNS

Continuing its leadership in bioeconomy, Karnataka has reached a record $39.21 billion (approximately Rs 3.54 lakh crore) in value terms in the field in 2025, a growth of 26.5% over 2023, according to a report released on Monday.

The state contributes over one-fifth to the national bioeconomy and more than 10% to its own gross state domestic product (GSDP), more than twice the national average of 4.57%, according to the BioEconomy Report 2025, released by IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge.

The last three years (2023-2025) marked a transition from growth to consolidation, where biotechnology in Karnataka evolved from a science-led sector into a full-scale, production-oriented bio-based economy anchored in research, entrepreneurship and sustainability, said the report released jointly by the Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS) and the Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE).

Biopharma remains the anchor with over 40% share (about $16.44 billion), driven by biologics, biosimilars, vaccines and diagnostics. Bioindustrial biotechnology has emerged as the fastest-growing segment (about $11.46 billion, around 29% share), led by fermentation-based industries, biofuels and enzymes — signalling Karnataka's shift toward a strong biomanufacturing economy.

▸ Bioeconomy, Page 4

Amazon's 2nd-largest office in Asia opens in B'luru, P10

IN NUMBERS

- **$8.2 billion** value added between 2023 and 2025
- **1,451** active biotechnology and life science enterprises across Karnataka by 2025-end
- **$1.14 billion** cumulative bioeconomy-linked funding mobilised between Jan 2024 and Oct 2025
- **218** new startups added in 2025 alone
- **10.51%** of GSDP – BT's contribution to state's economy
- **3 innovation corridors** – Mysuru, Belagavi and Dakshina Kannada emerging as regional bioclusters

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RELIEF AHEAD

3 more trains by June to ease crowding on Purple & Green lines

TRSL dispatches first DTG train; BMRCL expects statutory approvals soon

The train is expected to arrive at the Peenya depot by February-end. TRSL is likely to deliver a third DTG train — currently under production — by the end of March.

MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Packed like sardines during peak hours, the Purple and Green line trains have become a daily frustration for metro commuters. But relief is expected only by May–June, when three new trains will be inducted, sources aware of the matter said.

After months of delays, Bengal-based Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL) finally dispatched its first DTG train on February 18. The train is expected to arrive at the Peenya depot by February-end, one of the sources said.

In 2019, Chinese state-run CRRC Nanjing Puzhen won a Rs 1,578-crore contract to supply 36 trains — 15 for the Yellow Line and 21 for the Purple and Green lines. It delivered two Chinese-made prototypes — one each for the Yellow and Purple lines.

The remaining 34 trains are made by TRSL, CRRC's India partner. TRSL has so far supplied only eight Yellow Line trains.

The train dispatched by TRSL on February 18 is the first of the 20 for the Purple and Green lines. After arriving at the Peenya depot, the six coaches will be coupled to form a complete train for static and electrical circuit testing, followed by 750 km of trial runs on the mainline during night-time.

The first DTG train dispatched by Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL) on February 18. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Yellow Line trains operate on the Communications Based Train Control (CBTC), which allows driverless operations. In contrast, Purple and Green line trains run on the DTG signalling system, which requires locopilots.

Despite receiving the Purple Line prototype in January 2025, the BMRCL has yet to receive all 37 statutory clearances for its revenue service.

"Signalling software testing is currently underway and a new version will be installed. The safety certification process has also begun. Except for the multi-train (anti-collision) test, all other tests have been completed," the second source said.

TRSL is likely to deliver a third DTG train — currently under production — by the end of March, then dispatch the remaining seven CBTC trains for the Yellow Line, followed by the final 18 trains for the Purple and Green lines.

"We aim to induct the three DTG trains by May-June on both the Purple and Green lines, depending upon operational requirements. That should ease overcrowding to some extent," the source added.

Despite the Purple and Green lines having 57 trains, peak-hour metro travel in Bengaluru increasingly resembles the crush of Mumbai local trains. Many commuters say they skip several trains before finding space to board. Average weekday ridership has now crossed one million.

Peenya industrial area to get treated water via pipeline by April-end

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is aiming to complete the laying of dedicated pipelines to supply treated water to industries in the Peenya industrial area by the end of April.

The Rs 20-crore project is intended to promote the use of treated water and reduce the demand for Cauvery water. Nearly four million litres per day (MLD) of treated water from the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Nagasandra will be supplied to the industrial area through the dedicated pipeline. This is the first such initiative undertaken by the BWSSB.

Senior BWSSB officials said a separate distribution network is being established by laying a 27-km-long high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipeline.

"We are also constructing a sump-cum-pump house and a five-lakh-litre capacity overhead tank. The works are expected to be completed by the end of April," a senior BWSSB official said.

However, industrialists have raised concerns about on-ground implementation. They flagged issues related to water quality and the lack of infrastructure to store treated water.

"Most industries in the Peenya industrial area do not have a separate sump or plumbing line to store treated water. If we use our existing sumps for treated water, we won't have space for drinking water. Once supply begins, we are unsure how effectively we can utilise it without the necessary infrastructure," said Shiva Kumar R, past president of the Peenya Industries Association.

SHIVA KUMAR R
Past president, Peenya Industries Association

"Most industries in the Peenya industrial area do not have a separate sump or plumbing line to store treated water. If we use our existing sumps for treated water, we won't have space for drinking water. Once supply begins, we are unsure how effectively we can utilise it without the necessary infrastructure.

Several industrialists also expressed apprehension that the pipeline-laying work could further damage already deteriorating roads in the area.

"The infrastructure in the industrial area is already in poor condition. We have been urging authorities to improve it. With new works being taken up, we are concerned that road conditions may worsen," said another industrialist.

'Quality guaranteed'

BWSSB officials, however, maintained that water quality would not be an issue, stating that advanced treatment technology is being used.

The officials added that concerns raised by industrialists would be addressed as the project nears completion.

City's electoral roll deadline likely to be extended again

On schedule, GBA polls will be held by June-end, insists SEC

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The deadline for finalising the electoral roll — a prerequisite for conducting the long-delayed elections to Bengaluru's five municipal corporations — is likely to be extended for a third time.

However, the State Election Commission (SEC) has reiterated that elections in the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA) will be held by the end of June.

According to a circular issued in November 2025, the SEC had planned to publish the final ward-wise electoral roll on March 16, marking the completion of a 110-day exercise involving pre-revision and revision of the voters' list. By now, the commission was also expected to have closed the 15-day window for filing claims and objections.

Sources in the commission told *DH* that the deadline for submitting claims and objections to the draft electoral roll — published on January 19 and comprising 88.90 lakh voters — is set to be revised again.

"An official communication will be issued soon," an officer said, adding that the March 16 deadline could be extended by two weeks.

The proposed extension follows a representation by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar to SEC Commissioner SG Sangreshi, seeking a comprehensive street-wise and house-wise mapping of voters in Bengaluru to address what he described as "serious and widespread" errors in the electoral rolls.

He reportedly pointed to discrepancies in the draft rolls, including members of the same family being assigned to different polling stations, duplicate entries, and deletion of names.

3rd revision of deadline

In October 2025, the SEC initially announced a 90-day exercise to prepare the electoral roll, setting January 2026 as the deadline for completion. However, the schedule was revised the following month after the state government delayed notifying the newly carved wards. The deadline was subsequently extended to March 16.

If sources are to be believed, the commission now expects the final electoral roll to be ready by the first week of April.

Officials within the commission maintained that the revised schedule will not delay the elections, which are slated to be held by the end of June.

"We require about 45 days to complete all election-related processes, including nominations and polling arrangements. Even if the electoral roll is finalised in April, the elections will be conducted within the deadline set by the Supreme Court," an official said.

Gang posing as human rights squad extorts Rs 24 lakh

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Devanahalli police arrested nine people for impersonating a fake human rights outfit and extorting a man of Rs 24 lakh.

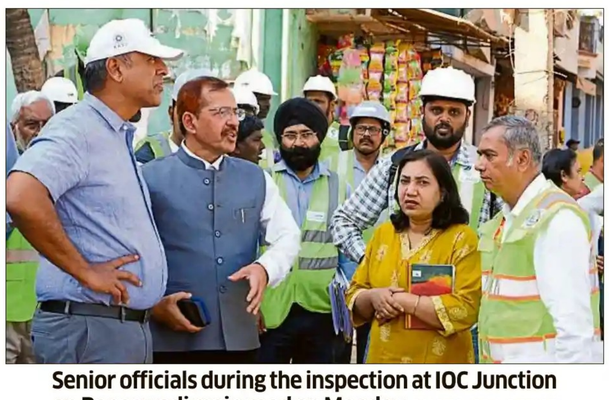
The arrested are C Krishnakumar Reddy, 50, a private bank employee; S Ahmed Sharif, 48, a real-estate agent; Venugopal, 49, a daily wager; Sampangirama, 47, a real-estate worker; Narayana Swamy, 52, a municipal council worker; Shiva KV, 42, a driver; TV Murugeshan, 65, a mason; Malayam Lathif, 53, a real-estate worker; and Venkatesh, 57, a dhobi.

On February 13, around 10 am, the 50-year-old victim was near Chinnaganahalli, Devanahalli, with Rs 24 lakh to hand over to another person.

The suspects arrived in a car bearing the board 'Human Rights Protection and Anti-Corruption Squad', threatened the victim for possessing the cash, and fled with the money.

The victim approached the Devanahalli police, and a case was registered. The police subsequently arrested all nine suspects. Five others are at large, and efforts are on to trace them, officials said.

The police recovered Rs 14.60 lakh, two vehicles used in the crime, and 13 mobile phones from the arrested. Further investigation is underway.



Senior officials during the inspection at IOC Junction on Banaswadi main road on Monday. PHOTO: GBA OFFICE

GBA, B-SMILE, K-RIDE review 3-km rotary flyover site

BENGALURU, DHNS: Senior officials of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Ltd (B-SMILE), and Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Enterprise (K-RIDE) on Monday inspected IOC Junction on Banaswadi main road, where an elevated rotary flyover has been proposed.

The inspection comes days after members of the Bengaluru Mobility Federation (BMF) met Energy Minister and Sarvagnanagar MLA KJ George with a petition to expedite the long-pending project.

During the inspection, GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao said the authority would soon seek approval from the government once the tender process is complete.

"The project comprises a three-km elevated corridor and a two-lane railway overbridge at the Baiyappanahalli railway level crossing," he said. He requested support from K-RIDE to ensure the project, estimated to cost Rs 380 crore, faces no delays during construction, as a suburban rail project is also proposed in the same area.

K-RIDE Managing Director Lakshman Singh shared concerns over one of the flyover ramps, which infringes on the railway project.

Crossing the Maruthi Seva Nagar flyover near Mukund Theatre has long been a challenge for motorists, despite being a key link between the city centre and northern areas.

GBA flags Rs 318-cr tax evasion by 13,600 properties in second round of audit

BENGALURU, DHNS

In the second round of property audit, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has identified alleged property tax evasion amounting to Rs 318 crore across 13,600 properties.

This takes the cumulative tax evasion or under-declaration of tax during the self-assessment scheme (SAS) to Rs 688 crore, covering a total of 23,600 properties.

The large-scale audit marks one of the most technology-driven tax enforcement drives undertaken in the city, with authorities signalling that enforcement will continue until all discrepancies are addressed.

Among the five corporations, the highest number of cases has been detected in West (7,242), followed by North (3,227), and South (1,763).

GBA's Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil said the initiative is aimed at ensuring fairness in tax collection and bringing all properties into compliance.

Explaining the process, he said the team carries property tax records on a mobile application during field visits.

"Each property's exact GPS coordinates are captured on-site. Field staff record usage (residential, commercial or mixed), number of floors, and actual built-up area. The data is transmitted to a backend system where a Quality Control (QC) team conducts 100% verification. Verified cases are matched against drone imagery and digitised building footprints.

"Discrepancies — such as larger built-up areas or undeclared commercial usage — automatically trigger system-generated show cause notices," he said.

The field teams are currently surveying about 10,000 properties per day, and further notices are expected as verification continues.

Officials emphasised that each notice clearly details the basis of calculation and variance detected, allowing property owners to view and respond to the findings.

Private manhole cleaners must register with BWSSB

BENGALURU, DHNS: All private agencies involved in cleaning manholes and sewage treatment plants (STPs) must mandatorily register with the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB).

The BWSSB has set a March 7 deadline for all such operators to complete their registration with the board.

In a statement, the BWSSB said Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) and residents of private layouts must engage only registered agencies for cleaning private manholes and STPs. "In case of any accidents during such cleaning, the RWAs will be held responsible," the board stated.

Boyfriend, his friend booked for drugging, raping teen on V-Day; counter-complaint filed

BENGALURU, DHNS: Police have registered a case against a 21-year-old man and his friend for allegedly drugging and raping the man's 19-year-old girlfriend at a rented villa on Valentine's Day.

In a counter-complaint, the two accused alleged that the woman attempted to extort money from them by threatening to publicise the matter through a news channel.

According to the woman's complaint, her boyfriend had invited her to the villa to celebrate Valentine's Day. His 32-year-old friend also joined them. She alleged that she was served a drink laced with intoxicating red pills, after which she felt dizzy and disoriented.

She further alleged that the two men took advantage of her condition and sexually assaulted her.

Based on her complaint, the Amruthahalli police have registered a case under sections 64, 70(1) and 351(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), pertaining to rape, gang rape and criminal intimidation involving threat to life or grievous harm.

Mutual allegations

In their complaint filed at the Malleswaram police station, the men alleged that the woman sought money from them, claiming she needed funds for her father's cancer treatment. They stated that she had befriended them on social media about a month ago and later became close to them.

Police sources said both complaints are being examined and statements from all parties are being verified.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Katha Kammata: Bairamangala Ramegowda, Amarendra Hollamballi; Seshadripuram College; 10.30 am.

Award Ceremony: Chief Minister's Medal Award Ceremony for Fire and Emergency Services, Home Guard, Civil Defence and State Disaster Response Force Officers; G Parameshwara; R A Mundkur Fire and Emergency Services Academy, Bannerghatta Road; 11 am.

Kadali Mahila Vedike: Award presentation; Shivaratri Deshikendra Swamiji, GR Channabasappa, Award Recipient: Geetha Mahadeva Prasad, Honorary Recipient: SG Sushilamma, L Revanasiddhaiah, C Somashekar; Nayana Hall, Kannada Bhavan, JC Road; 2 pm onwards.

KASSIA: Dialogue: PM Narendraswamy, Guest: R Gokul, Chaired by BR Ganesha Rao; Kasiya, Vijayanagar; 3 pm.

CULTURAL

Dasa Tarangini Vocals: Raghavendra Swamy Math, Thyagarajanagar; 6 pm.

Honnaru Rangotsava: 'Maniye Devar' play performance; Directed by BV Rajaram; Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 6.30 pm.

Dasa Gana Vaibhava: Avani Bhat (vocals), Rajendra Bende (keyboard), Sarvottam (tabla); Raghavendra Swami Math, Prakasanagar; 7 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Mainly clear sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	32.0°C
Minimum	19.0°C
Rainfall	--
Humidity	78%
Sunset (Feb 24)	6:27 pm
Sunrise (Feb 25)	6:39 am
Moonrise	10:41 am
Moonset	11:54 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

SCRATCH SCIENCE

Why stress makes itch fade; IISc maps the brain circuit

BENGALURU, DHNS

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have identified a brain circuit that helps explain why itching reduces during moments of acute stress.

The findings, published in the journal *Cell Reports*, shed light on how an emotional state can influence physical sensations.

Itch and pain are both unpleasant responses to irritation, but they trigger different reactions. Pain usually causes a person to withdraw, while itch leads to scratching. Although scientists have studied how stress affects pain, its impact on itch has remained less clear.

A team of researchers from IISc focused on the lateral hypothalamic area, a region of the brain known to regulate stress and emotions. Using genetically engineered mouse models, they identified a group of neurons in this region that become active during short-term stress.

When researchers activated these stress-related neurons, scratching behaviour reduced in mice experiencing both short-term chemically induced itch and a psoriasis-like chronic itch. When the same neurons were silenced, stress no longer reduced scratching. This showed that the neurons play a key role in suppressing an itch during acute stress.

The study, led by Jagat Narayan Prajapati and Arnab Barik in collaboration with Aynal Haque and Giriraj Sahu, also uncovered differences between acute and chronic itch.

In mice with long-term inflammation resembling psoriasis, these stress-sensitive neurons became more excitable and behaved differently, preventing the usual suppression of itch. The findings suggest that chronic stress may worsen persistent itching by altering brain circuits.

A chronic itch affects millions worldwide, and most treatments focus on the skin or immune system.

"Most current treatments for chronic itch are peripheral — they treat the symptoms, not the cause. But the interaction between stress, anxiety, and sensations like itch happens in the brain," Barik explains. "Understanding these circuits gives us a framework for eventually developing therapies that address the central mechanisms underlying stress-related itch."

Two held in condiment shop assault case

BENGALURU, DHNS: Byatarayanapura police on Monday arrested two men for assaulting a condiments shop owner after he refused to give them free cigarettes.

The Sunday night incident, caught on CCTV and widely shared on social media, involved the accused — Manjesh alias Benne, 32, and Srinivas K, 33, both from Avalahalli — demanding cigarettes and vandalising the shop when refused.

Owner Raju was assaulted while a customer trying to intervene was also injured.

A case of attempt to murder was registered, and the accused, reportedly habitual offenders, were arrested.

Alarm foils burglary bid at Canara Bank in Sheshadripuram

BENGALURU, DHNS: Unidentified miscreants attempted to burgle the Canara Bank branch in Sheshadripuram early on Monday.

The accused cut open a window to gain entry and destroyed the CCTV connection. However, the alarm was triggered, alerting security personnel, and the accused fled the scene.

A senior police officer said the incident occurred around 3 am when the suspects broke open the rear grille of the building.

They searched the bank interiors and moved towards the strong room area. In an attempt to disable the security system, they reportedly tried to cut electrical wires near the strong room.

However, the alarm system was activated during the attempt, causing the siren to go off. Shocked by the sound, they fled before executing the theft.

Sheshadripuram police rushed to the spot upon receiving information and conducted an inspection.

A case has been registered based on a complaint by the bank manager, Gayatri, and police are examining CCTV footage from surrounding areas to trace the suspects.

Daring ATM break-in

In a daring attempt about 300 metres from the Halasuru Gate police station, unidentified miscreants targeted an ATM kiosk and tried to break open the cash-dispensing machine early on Monday.

The suspects reportedly tampered with the ATM and attempted to force it open. Their plan was foiled when the alarm system sent an alert, prompting them to flee immediately.

The kiosk had no security guard on duty at the time, police said.

Halasuru Gate police have launched a manhunt for the suspects and are checking CCTV footage from the premises to trace the accused.

K'taka topper in clean energy, but ecosystem weak, says report

Renewable energy accounts for 37% of power procurement

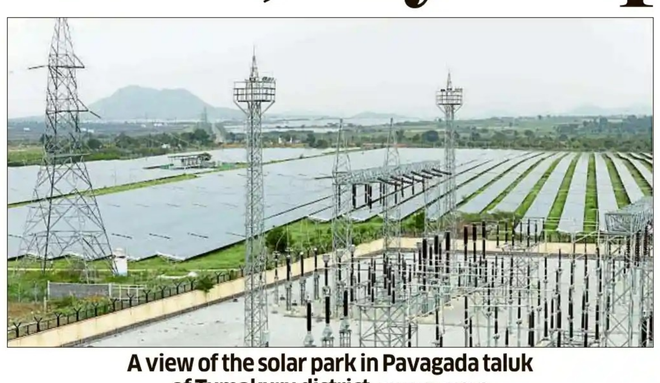
CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

When it comes to decarbonisation efforts, Karnataka tops the country's populous states but lags behind when it comes to transforming the power ecosystem and enabling conducive markets, as per a new report.

The joint report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) and Ember, a think tank, does recognise Karnataka as one of three strong performers that showcase consistent leadership in the decarbonisation dimension. Himachal Pradesh and Kerala are the other two states.

India aims to achieve installed capacity of 500 gigawatts of non-fossil fuel by 2030. The cumulative installed capacity crossed 100 GW by the end of October 2025.

In the third edition of the report, experts from the two organisations analysed the data for 21 states on a three-dimensional framework to understand the progress across key dimensions of the clean electricity transition.



A view of the solar park in Pavagada taluk of Tumakuru district. DH FILE PHOTO

RE high share

Karnataka topped the states in the efforts made to shift to renewable energy (RE), utilising the RE potential and the extent to which economic growth is decoupled from emissions.

"Its high renewable energy share of approximately 37% in the total power procurement mix contributed to its relatively lower power sector emission intensity, reflecting the state's growing green electricity portfolio," it said.

Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu followed Kerala and Himachal Pradesh in the decarbonisation dimension. Delhi, Telangana and Bihar showed improvement while Odisha remained heavily reliant on thermal power due to legacy coal-based infrastructure.

"No state demonstrates consistently strong performance (features in top seven) across all three dimensions. The findings suggest that even leading states need to strengthen weaker links to achieve a holistic transition," the report said.

Ecosystem

Decarbonisation, however, requires a robust and well-prepared power system to integrate RE, enable decentralised energy solutions and strengthen grid operations. Here, Karnataka fell to 18th position while Delhi, Haryana and Assam topped the list.

The study attributed this to limited smart meter deployment and low distributed solar capacity in its total RE capacity mix. Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand and Telangana were at the bottom because they showed limited progress across the dimension.

Similarly, Karnataka fell to 14th position when viewed through market enablers lens. Here, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan topped the chart by taking up initiatives that accelerate RE adoption. The dimension sought to capture both demand-side drivers like electric vehicles and supply side measures like green tariffs.

Vibhuti Garg, Director – South Asia, IEEFA, said such divergence was inevitable at the sub national level given the structural and historical factors.

"Going forward, understanding these state-level differences and gaps in progress is essential for designing targeted policies and interventions," she added.

Ruchita Shah, Energy Analyst, Ember, said more targeted approach to policies and interventions were needed to ensure the momentum was evenly spread.

Toxic veggies: Report shows nitrates in water, lead in air

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The committee which looked into the contamination of vegetables has also found presence of nitrates linked to certain cancers in water samples and lead in fine particles (PM 10) collected from Kolar, Chikkaballapur and Nelamangala.

DH on Monday reported about a committee led by regional director of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) finding lead, a highly toxic heavy metal, in 26% of 72 samples. The tests also showed residues of 12 pesticides, including banned monocrotophos.

According to the committee, while tests of soil samples showed high amounts of selenium, samples of groundwater and treated water collected also showed contamination.

The nitrates, which can turn into carcinogenic nitrosamines after consumption, exceeded the limit of 45 mg/litre in three samples with groundwater from Soppahalli (Chikkaballapur) showing 111.6 mg/litre, while one from Thurandahalli had 97.4 mg/litre and Chikarasanahalli sample had 75.3 mg/litre.

The electrical conductivity was 3,252 microsiemens per cm & total dissolved solids (TDS) crossed the 2,000 mg/litre mark, it said. The committee said concentration of almost all heavy metals was below detectable limit. "Though iron & manganese were detected, they were within limit prescribed in drinking water specifications," it said.

The analysis of PM 10 particles collected for 8 hours from the ambient air in 2 places showed presence of heavy metals.

While the sample from Soppahalli (Chikkaballapur) had copper at 13.25 nanogram/cubic metre, that from Thurandahalli (Kolar) showed presence of lead at 13.1 nanogram/cubic metre, nickel (29.2 nanogram/cubic metre) & copper (17.7 nanogram/cubic metre), the panel said.

'Contamination comes back to the capital'

R Anjaneya Reddy of Shashwata Neeravari Horata Samithi (Chikkaballapur) said the government supplied contaminated water to Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts, and farmers, who grow vegetables, are returning the toxicity to the state capital.

He said the source of the contamination was the secondary treated water from Koramangala and Challaghatta (KC) Valley pumped to lakes in two districts.

"Vegetables have high uptake of water and all nutrients. The nitrate load in water is absorbed by vegetables, which are consumed by all in Bengaluru, from households to 5-star hotels visited by leaders from across the country and world. The government's KC Valley project is to blame for any increase in cancer cases and kidney-related ailments," he said.

Cong MLA's betting case: ED files additional charge sheet

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday said it had filed a supplementary charge sheet in the illegal online betting case involving Congress MLA K C Veerendra 'Puppy'.

MLA K C Veerendra 'Puppy'

The agency, in the supplementary prosecution complaint, has named Pruthvi N Raj, K C Thippeswamy, Fonepaisa Payment Solutions Pvt Ltd, Gulshan Khattar, Puppy's Tours and Travels LLP, Arjun Nagabhushan, Abhijith Sajjan and Logicforge Solutions Pvt Ltd, under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The ED had earlier arrested Veerendra under section 19 of PMLA, and a prosecution complaint against him was filed before the additional city civil and sessions judge in Bengaluru last year.

"Further, vide provisional attachment order under section 5(1) of PMLA, movable and immovable properties of K C Veerendra and other accused, totalling to Rs 177.3 crore (approximately) were provisionally attached. With this, the ED has attached/seized assets worth more than Rs 320 crore in the present case under provisions of PMLA, 2002," the agency said.

"During the course of investigation, proceeds of crime exceeding Rs 2,300 crore have been identified so far, which were generated through illegal online betting and gambling activities and subsequently laundered through multiple layers of transactions".

Desi switch for convocation attire just a few steps away

Post-governor's advice, govt forms VCs' panel on issue

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The practice of wearing Western gowns and caps for convocation ceremonies at state universities will soon be history as the higher education department has decided to introduce uniform traditional attires for convocations.

This will be for candidates receiving degrees and other certificates as well as teachers and guests attending the convocations.

The department has constituted a committee of vice-chancellors to submit recommendations for the purpose.

Confirming this to *DH*, Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar said, "We have decided to shift from the British-era gowns to traditional Indian ethnic wear. An official announcement on the same will be made soon after we receive recommendations from the committee".

Wearing western gowns and caps will soon be history, with Indian ethnic wear replacing them at university convocations in the state. DH FILE PHOTO

Dr Sudhakar said the attire will probably be khadi.

"Some universities have already switched to khadi. Some have stopped using western caps and replaced the same with Mysuru peta. But we want it to be uniform in public universities," Sudhakar said.

As shared by sources, this was proposed by Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot during the recent conclave of vice-chancellors chaired by him.

During the meeting, the governor stressed on the need to transit from British gowns to Indian wear and emphasised on introducing khadi or any other local handloom fabric.

"The governor proposed saree for women and kurtha-pyjama for men," the sources said.

The minister said the colour of the attire would be white for everyone.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) had directed all universities in the country to shift to handloom fabrics for convocations.

The erstwhile BJP government in the state had also tried to switch to desi attire from western gowns and caps for convocations. Though the matter was discussed widely, no concrete decision could be made.

HC disposes of suo motu PIL on stadium stampede

'House committee will consider draft SOP, views of amicus curiae'

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka high court on Monday disposed of a suo motu PIL, registered in connection with the stampede at M Chinnaswamy stadium on June 4, 2025, in which 11 people lost their lives.

A division bench, comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Poonacha, passed this order after the state government assured that the contents of the draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as well as the suggestions by amicus curiae would be considered by the Legislative Assembly panel which is considering Karnataka Crowd Control (Managing crowd at events and places of gathering) Bill, 2025.

Advocate General Shashikiran Shetty submitted that the bill has been referred to a committee for the consultation process. The suggestions, incorporated in the revised SOP dated January 10, 2026, would also be considered.

Senior advocate S Susheela, amicus curiae, who assisted the court in the suo motu PIL, submitted that there are some critical gaps in the proposed legislation when compared with the provisions incorporated in the SOP placed before the court.

After recording the assurance of Advocate General, the bench disposed of the suo motu PIL, reserving liberty to the amicus curiae to seek revival of the petition in case a cause arises.

Train services extended for fair

BENGALURU, DHNS: The South Western Railway (SWR) will extend the Yeshwantpur–Shivamogga Town–Yeshwantpur Tri-weekly Express (train 16581/16582) up to Talaguppa on March 1 to facilitate extra rush of passengers in view of Marikamba Jatra Mahotsava.

Train number 16581 will depart from Yeshwantpur at 12.15 am and reach Talaguppa at 9 am. In return direction, train number 16582 will depart from Talaguppa at 10 pm and arrive at Yeshwantpur at 4.45 am the following day. In addition, SWR will operate a special train (06587) on the route.

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Kantara film mimicry case: Ranveer Singh moves High Court

Court refuses to hear case on urgent basis

BENGALURU, DHNS

Hindi actor Ranveer Singh has filed a petition in the high court challenging a crime case registered against him for his mimicry of a character in the Kannada movie 'Kantara: Chapter 1'.

The matter was mentioned before the bench presided over by Justice M Nagaprasanna, requesting an urgent hearing.

Ranveer Singh

The advocate representing the actor submitted that Ranveer Singh was merely expressing admiration for actor Rishab Shetty's performance in the movie.

He prayed for an urgent hearing, stating that Ranveer Singh has already received two notices from the police.

Despite repeated requests, the court refused to hear the matter urgently and said the matter would be heard as and when it is listed.

The incident occurred during the promotion event of the movie 'Durandhar' at the IFFI festival held in Goa.

On the stage, Ranveer Singh allegedly mimicked Rishab Shetty as portrayed by the latter in the movie.

The High Grounds police have registered the FIR based on a private complaint.

PM SHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA CHANNAPATNA
RAMNAGARA DISTRICT -562161
(An Autonomous Body, Under Ministry of Education, Government of India)
Phone: 080-29783113, Email Id: kvchannapatna@gmail.com
Website https://channapatna.kvs.ac.in

WALK IN INTERVIEW FOR CONTRACTUAL TEACHERS FOR SESSION 2026-27
Registration time: 9:00 am to 10:00 am

Sl. No	Post	Subject	Date of Interview
1.	Trained Graduate Teachers	English/ Hindi/ Sanskrit/ Mathematics/ Science/ Social Science	26.02.2026 (Thursday)
2.	Primary Teachers	Primary Teachers	
3.	Special Subject Teachers	Special Educator / Music Teacher / Regional Language (Kannada) / Staff Nurse/ Educational Counsellor / Art and Craft Instructor / Computer Instructor	
4.	Sports Coaches & Yoga Instructor	Volleyball / Kabaddi / Kho-Kho / Basketball / Tae-kwon-do / Yoga / Karate (Self-Defence)	

1. All Candidates will bring their Original documents with one set of self- attested copies and passport size 2 photos.
2. Detailed Information and application form are available on School Website: **https://kvchannapatna.ac.in**
3. No TA/DA will be admissible for attending the interview.

Sd/-
Principal

One more FIR against RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna

BENGALURU, DHNS: One more FIR has been registered against RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna, following his arrest and questioning by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) of the Bengaluru police.

The case was registered on February 21 by the Basaveshwara Nagar police following a complaint by Pavithra B N. The FIR also named Mylarappa B C, a former Bengaluru University professor.

Pavithra told the police that she received a letter at her home on the evening of December 5. She alleged that letter made defamatory statements about her late husband and advocate Raghu.

The woman also alleged that along with the letter, there was a threatening note asking her to withdraw cases against Mylarappa.

Police initially registered an non-cognizable report and after obtaining permission from the court, a formal FIR was registered against the duo under sections related to criminal intimidation and intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace, the FIR noted.

Karnataka to witness 4-6 heat-wave days this summer

North interior and coastal parts likely to be worst hit

HEAT IS ON

- In 15 north interior Karnataka districts, average increase could be up by four degrees Celsius
- Coastal districts may experience sultry conditions due to high humidity levels
- South interior Karnataka may not record heat wave days and could see temperatures rise by 1.5–2 degrees Celsius compared to last year

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted that Karnataka could witness four to six days of heat-wave conditions this summer, with north interior Karnataka and coastal districts likely to be the worst affected.

According to IMD's long-range forecast, the state is expected to experience an above-normal summer, with temperatures rising 2–6 degrees Celsius above normal. In the 15 north interior Karnataka districts, the average increase could be up by four degrees Celsius.

Coastal districts may experience sultry conditions due to high humidity levels, though south interior Karnataka may not record heat wave days and could see temperatures rise by 1.5–2 degrees Celsius compared to last year.

At present, 16 of the state's 31 districts are recording temperatures above 35 degrees Celsius. Haveri (36.7°C) and Raichur (36.5°C) were the hottest places, while Kodagu recorded the lowest maximum temperature at 32.5°C. In north interior Karnataka, Bidar, Kalaburagi, Raichur and Bagalkot could see a heat-wave during March and April.

N Puviarasan, head of the Bengaluru Meteorological Centre, said heat wave conditions are likely in March and April, with pre-monsoon showers accompanied by lightning expected from May on wards.

"The current atmospheric systems suggest that March and April will remain dry. Pre-monsoon showers can be expected only towards the end of May," he said.

He says that out of the 90 summer days, the state could witness a maximum of six isolated heat-wave days, where temperatures may rise by at least five degrees above normal. "Above normal temperature is very likely over coastal Karnataka and due to associated relative humidity, there would be higher impact on people," he says.

The World Meteorological Organisation defines a heat-wave as five or more consecutive days when the daily maximum temperature exceeds the average maximum temperature by five degrees Celsius.

The IMD report attributes the above-normal summer to the ongoing El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phase and its interaction with the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), which are influencing temperature patterns across India.

Experts point out that Karnataka has not consistently recorded or reported heat wave cases in recent years.

An economist noted that parts of the Kalyan Karnataka region frequently record temperatures above 45 degrees Celsius, but such instances have not been officially acknowledged.

"Recognising heat waves would require implementation of the standard operating procedures prescribed by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)," she said.

With the Union government recently recognising heat waves as a natural disaster and allocating additional funds, experts say the state should formulate a comprehensive action plan.

Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority commissioner Honnamba S said the state government is yet to receive an official communication from IMD regarding heat wave conditions.

"Last year, heat wave-prone districts were asked to prepare mitigation plans. Similar preparations will be made this year," she said, adding that Karnataka has already declared heat wave a local disaster and will implement further measures once guidelines and additional funds are received from the Centre.

Bengaluru techie digitises 100-year data on bird tagging

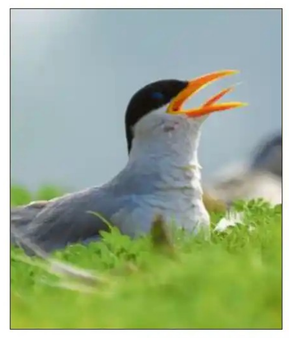
PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Bridging technology and conservation, a Bengaluru-based tech professional has digitised nearly century-old records of bird-ringing data maintained by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). His efforts of transforming handwritten field notes of around 450 species into a digital database will help researchers and policy makers in preparing a long-term policy.

Deepak Rajanna, in collaboration with BNHS, has digitised data on over 7.5 lakh individual birds collected since 1927 over the past six months. This is expected to benefit future studies — particularly on migratory birds — and assist in formulating national and global long-term conservation policies and action plans.

For the past 98 years, BNHS has been ring-tagging various bird species across India. The organisation also coordinates with agencies in other countries that tag birds. However, much of this data was maintained in pen-and-paper format, making it vulnerable to damage or loss. With digitisation, experts say the data will significantly strengthen long-term conservation efforts.

Rajanna, a wildlife enthusiast who has applied his expertise in technology to the project, has so far digitised over 25,000 sheets of BNHS records containing information on more than 3.5 lakh ringed birds. The records include details such as the date the birds were tagged, their



River terns at the Bhadra reservoir. DH PHOTO

physical parameters (weight, bill length, tail length, tarsus length, wingspan), the location where they were tagged, migratory routes, and the places where they were last sighted.

"During my initial exploration with BNHS, I realised that they had vast amounts of data on tagged birds in physical sheets stretching back to nearly hundred years. Converting that data into digitised form and sharing the resulting insights with other states, countries, and organisations would help multiple agencies and nations protect the birds and their habitat. So, under the guidance of BNHS, I, along with volunteers, interns, researchers and other contributors began using technology and algorithms to develop a solution: Avifauna," says Rajanna.

P Sathiyaselvam, deputy director and head of the Wetlands and Flyways Programme at BNHS, says, "BNHS has been ringing birds since 1927. Bird ringing and other tagging techniques are essential to protecting birds throughout their migratory routes. If a bird is protected in one place but faces threats along its route, then all conservation efforts fail."

He says data collected over the last century paints a gloomy picture, as several avian habitats— including water bodies, grasslands and forest patches—have been degraded due to various reasons (both natural and man-made).

"By presenting digitised data that can be shared globally, we can urge multinational bodies to formulate policies that ensure safe passage along the flyways of these birds," he adds. Sathiyaselvam says the long-term data is also helping scientists understand the impact of climate change on birds and their habitats, identify which populations of species use the three flyways in India, and, most importantly, study the spread of zoonotic diseases among avian species.

While the digital data collected through the 'Avifauna' platform is currently limited to academic and research purposes, Rajanna is also developing a mobile application through which citizen scientists can contribute information.

For researchers like Karthik N J, a student at Kuvempu University in Shivamogga studying river terns on islands in the Bhadra river, Rajanna's platform is helping streamline scientific data collection.

"I have tagged over a thousand river terns. Birdwatchers across the world who sight these birds report their observations. Avifauna is helping me analyse the data easily and scientifically," he says.

Govt to roll out rare diseases policy soon

BENGALURU, DHNS: Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao said that the Karnataka State Rare Diseases Policy would be released shortly. He assured that the government would ensure that no rare disease would be omitted from the purview of the policy. He was speaking after inaugurating 11th edition of 'Racefor7' conducted by the Organisation for Rare Diseases India (ORDI), recently.

Prasanna Shirol, ORDI co-founder and executive director, said: "The rare disease community now looks forward to a time-bound, inclusive, and well-resourced policy that ensures seamless access to diagnosis, treatment, supportive care, and financial protection.

"This is a critical opportunity for Karnataka to set a national benchmark in rare disease care — and ORDI is ready to collaborate with the government to ensure effective implementation that truly transforms patients' lives," he added.

Lifeline for patients

ORDI has been a lifeline for over 15,000 rare disease fighters, providing sustained advocacy, guidance, and a supportive ecosystem to help patients and families navigate the complex medical, social, and financial challenges associated with these conditions.

IN THE COURT OF THE VII ADDL. CITY CIVIL & SESSIONS JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-19)
OS. No. 1398/2025

BETWEEN : Plaintiff : Smt. Nagarathna, W/o Late Dr. S. Somasekhar, Aged about 67 years, R/at: # 225, 32nd A Cross, 7th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru - 560070.
-V/s-
Defendants : 1. Puneeth, 2. Dr. Suguna, 3. Smt. Namana .S

NOTICE / SUMMONS TO THE DEFENDANTS

To, **Mr. Puneeth,** S/o Late Dr. S. Somasekhar, Aged about 52 years, R/at: # 4/2, 4th Floor, 7th Cross, 3rd Main, Ramanjaneyanagara, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bengaluru - 560061.

Defendant No. 1 address

Whereas the above named plaintiff instituted a suit against you for partition and separate possession of the suit schedule property.

You are hereby summoned to appear before this court **on 12.03.2026 at 11 a.m.** in person or through advocate / pleader to answer the questions to the same. Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as ex-parte.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the House property building comprising two houses: a 3 BHK house on the ground and a 3-3HK house on the first floor each bearing No. 225/9, (Old No. 225) with PID No. 59-93-9, measuring to East to West 12.20 mts and North - South 18.30 mts, in total 2400 Sq.feet, situated at 32nd A Cross, 7th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru and is bounded on:- East By : Site No. 224, West By : Site No. 226, North By : Site No. 241, South By : Road.

Given under my hand & seal of the court, this 1st day of February 2026.

By order of the Court, Senior Sheristedar, City Civil Court, Bengaluru.
Advocate for Plaintiff

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Tender No. MD-CH-WP-Eye-OT-718. For and on behalf of the President of India, the Medical Director/Central Hospital, South Eastern Railway, Garden Reach, Kolkata-700043 invites E-tender for the following works before 15.00 hrs. on date mentioned against items and will be opened at 15.30 hrs. **Description of works :** 'Upgraded Modular Opthalmic Operation Theatre' at S.E. Railway/Central Hospital/SER/Garden Reach. **Tender Value:** ₹ 4,48,90,324.64. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 3,74,500/-. **Cost Tender Document :** ₹ 0. **Date of Opening:** 16.03.2026. **Completion period of the work:** 04 (Four) months. Any change in tender schedule, corrigendum, amendment, if any, shall be available on the e-tender portal only and same will not be publish in the newspaper. Interested Tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/description specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. **N.B. :** Prospective Bidders may regular visit **www.ireps.gov.in** to participate in all tenders. **(PR-1220)**

OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL (A&E), KARNATAKA, BENGALURU

No: CC/C 1/2025-2026/171 Date: 23-02-2026

NOTIFICATION

Shri Himanshu Chudhary, Data Entry Operator Gr. 'A', Office of the Accountant General (A&E), Karnataka, Bengaluru has remained absent from duty unauthorizedly from 31-12-2024 to 29.07.2025, 30.07.2025 to 22.09.2025 and w.e.f. 27.10.2025 till date. In this regard, Memorandum of Charges was issued vide No.CC/C 1/25-26/162 dated 05.02.2026 through e-mail and speed post to his residence. If no reply is received from Shri Himanshu Chudhary within 10 days from the date of publishing of this intimation, it will be treated that Shri Himanshu Chudhary, DEO has accepted all charges contemplated against him and further action would be initiated as per extant rules.

Sd/-
Senior Accounts Officer / CC

GOVERNMENT OF KARANATAKA
(BHADRA COMMAND AREA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, MALAVAGOPPA, SHIVAMOGGA)
ಸಂ: ಕಾ.ಇಂ/ಭ.ಕಾ/ವಿ–2/PMKSY/ಟೆಂ.ಪ್ರ/2025–26/786
ದಿನಾಂಕ : 20.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION IFT-14
(Through KPPP-Portal only)

Bhadra CADA, Malavagoppa, Shivamogga, The under signed invites tenders under the H/A 4701-PMKSY from Class-II and above contractors for the FIC work of Amount put to tender value Rs. **318.02** Lakhs, for the year 2025-26 The tenders are invited in KW-4 bid document through http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in and in Two cover system as per KTPP Act -1999 & rules 2000. The bidders can access to e-tender from **20.02.2026** to **12.03.2026** till 4.30 pm, Last Date & Time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications is **11.03.2026** till 4.30 pm. Technical bid will be opened on **13.03.2026** at 5.00 pm and the financial bid will be opened after the approval of Technical bid from Competent authority at the office of Executive Engineer, Engineering Division No-2, Bhadra CADA, Ranebennur. **Sd/- Executive Engineer, Engineering Division-2, Bhadra CADA Ranebennur-581115.**

DIPR/HVR/KSMCA/737/2025-26

Karnataka Government
Youth Empowerment & Sports, Belagavi

No: DYES/BGV/OUTSOURCE/2025-26. Date: 21/02/2026

: E-Tender Publication:

Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Belagavi called E-Tender for Providing Various Man Power Services on Outsource Basis to Youth Empowerment and Sports Department, Belagavi details are as follows.

1	Tender Publication Date	No. DYES/BGV/OUTSOURCE/2025-26 Dtd: 21/02/2026
2	Last Date to upload E-Tender (In double Envelope)	Dtd: 09 /03/2026 at 5.00 pm
3	Date to Open Technical Envelope	Dtd: 11/03/2026 at 11.00 am
4	Date to Open Financial Envelope (If Possible)	Dtd: 13/03/2026 at 11.00 am
5	Estimated Cost of Tender	Rs.150.51 Lakh
6	Deposit of EMD with E-Tender	Rs. 2.26 Lakh
7	Tender Validity	90 days
8	Address & Ph.No of the Officer	The Deputy Director, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Belagavi Ph No: 0831-2474101

Sd/-Deputy Director,
Youth Empowerment and Sports, Belagavi

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1913/KSMCA/2025-26

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KARNATAKA
(Established by an Act of the Parliament in 2009)
Kadaganchi, Aland road, Kalaburagi-585 367., Phone (08477)-226722
Website: www.cuk.ac.in, Email: registrar@cuk.ac.in

OFFLINE TENDER NOTICE

Offline tender bids are invited for and on behalf of the Central University of Karnataka from eligible and experienced contractors for execution of the following works at the CUK Campus:

1. Watershed Management Works in approximately 30 acres of Plantation Terrain Area of CUK Campus under the NBCC Project.
2. Lifting and laying black soil in the Pits and Trenches of Plantation area in approximately 40 acres of Terrain Area of CUK Campus under the NBCC Project, as briefly described in the tender documents.

The detailed tender document containing scope of work, eligibility criteria, technical specifications, and terms & conditions can be downloaded from the University **website: www.cuk.ac.in.**

Place : Kalaburagi **Sd/-**
Date : 20-02-2026 **REGISTRAR**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No. CGM(Tech)/DGM(PROC &APCC)/EE(PROC)-3/AEE7/2025-26/6127-140 Date: 23.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

KPTCL invites Bids on electronic mode for the following works against following Enquiry Number:

Enquiry number/ Name of the Work

KPTCL/2025-26/TL/WORK_INDENT3297

Combined package of :

Work-(A): Strengthening of existing 66kV Transmission line from existing 220/66kV **Anchepalya** sub-station to 66/11KV **Yadiyuru** sub-station by using HTLS (HPC) conductor on existing 66kV Anchepalya - Yadiyuru SC line on DC Tower with one of the circuit to be LILO of 66/11KV Thippur substation for a distance of 28.564kms, along with construction of one number of 66KV TBs at 220/66KV **Anchepalya** and construction of one number of 66KV TB at 66/11KV **Yadiyuru** in Kunigal Taluk, Tumakuru District on Total Turnkey basis including Supply of all Materials/ equipments, Mandatory Spares, Erection (Including Civil Works) of all materials/equipments, Testing and Commissioning and Buy back of released materials from existing lines.

Work(B): Reconductoring of existing 66kV Coyote conductor by HTLS conductor(Ampacity equivalent to Drake ACSR) of 66kV DC line from 220 kV **Yachenahally** sub-station to 66 kV **Channarayapatna** sub-station(Line-1 & Line-2) for a distance of 4.791kms in Channarayapatna Taluk, Hassan District. De-commissioning of materials/equipments along with Buy back of Released Materials.

Work(C): I) Strengthening of existing 66kV DC line with coyote conductor to HPC from 220kV **Yachenahalli** sub-station to diversion tower of **Shravanabelagola** DC line & conversion of existing 66kV SC line on SC Towers by DC line with HPC conductor from diversion tower to 66kV Shravanabelagola sub-station by providing 66kV MC towers and stringing 3rd circuit 66kV Coyote conductor line from Diversion tower to 66kV **Shravanabelagola** sub-station for providing radial connectivity to 66kV **Mattanavile** sub-station in Channarayapatna Taluk, Hassan District.

II) Replacement of 2x12.5MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformers by 2x20MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformers and Construction of two number of 66kV Line Terminal bay along with Conversion of existing strung bus by rigid bus at 66/11kV **Shravanabelagola** sub-station in Channarayapatna Taluk, Hassan District. De-commissioning of materials /equipments along with Buy back of Released Materials.

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after **25.02.2026. Any extension of Due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement portal. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.**

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

Sd/- Chief General Manager(Tech)., Corporate Office, KPTCL, 11th Floor, Indhana Bhavan, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru - 560 009.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Call-3)
(only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (UWP), 5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G.Road, Bengaluru-560 009

Division	IFT Number	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
(WWM-P) CV	BWSSB/EE (WWM-P-CV)/PB/ 1715/2025-26 Date: 19.02.2026	Rs. 33,55,879/- / EMD: Rs.67,120/-	27.02.2026 Upto 4.00 P.M.	02.03.2026 at 4.30 P.M.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-P)CV

The details regarding the tender & participation in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/DD-C.P/5829/KSMCA/2025-26

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, (Lakes),
3rd Floor, Mini Vidhana Soudha, N.E.S. Road,
Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560 064.

No:BNCC/EE(Lakes)/Tend-01/2025-26 Date: 23.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Single Cover System) (Only through KPP Portal)
website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

The Executive Engineer, (Lakes), BNCC, invites Tenders on item rate basis for the works mentioned below from the registered contractors of BNCC or equivalent registration with BBMP/CPWD/ KPWD/Railways/MES or any State Government Organisations.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work/Category
1.	Annual Maintenance of Lakshmipura Lake. **Approximate value of work (₹ in Lakhs) : 12.00, EMD in ₹: 30,000/-.**
2.	Annual Maintenance of Bagalagunte Lake. **Approximate value of work (₹ in Lakhs) : 20.00, EMD in ₹: 50,000/-.**
3.	Annual Maintenance of Kammagondanahalli Lake. **Approximate value of work (₹ in Lakhs) : 25.00, EMD in ₹: 50,000/-.**
4.	Annual Maintenance of Abbigere Lake. **Approximate value of work (₹ in Lakhs) : 25.00, EMD in ₹: 50,000/-.**
5.	Rejuvenation of Wetland in Allalasandra and Kogilu Lake. **Approximate value of work (₹ in Lakhs) : 30.00, EMD in ₹: 60,000/-.**
6.	Repairs and Upgradation of catch drain in Kacharakanahalli Lake. (**SC**). **Approximate value of work (₹ in Lakhs) : 49.00, EMD in ₹: 49,000/-.**

Calendar of Events: (1) Availability of Tender Documents: **25.02.2026 after 4:00 p.m. (2)** Last Date for receipt of Tenders: **09.03.2026 upto 4:00 p.m. (3)** Opening of Tender Bid: **10.03.2026 at 4:30 p.m.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Lakes), BNCC.

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Malleshwaram Division, Zone-2, 2nd Cross Road,
Jaladarshini Layout, MSR Nagar, Mathikere, Bengaluru-560054.

No: EE/MLM/KPPP/16/2025-26 Date: 21-02-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

Executive Engineer, Malleshwaram Division, Zone-2, BWCC, Bengaluru invites Tender from reputed Consultants for the Project Management Consultancy Services detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Comprehensive Development of Ward Cross Roads, Drains and Other Allied Works and Construction of Govt. Higher Primary School in Malleshwaram Assembly Constituency. **(Package-MLM-01) - (Call-2) - Estimated PMC Amount (in Rs.): 35,45,000/-, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 50,000/-**
2	Comprehensive Development of Roads, Drains to Selected Road in Arterial, Sub Arterial and Other Major Roads in Malleshwaram Assembly Constituency. **(Package-MLM-02) - (Call-2) - Estimated PMC Amount (in Rs.): 60,14,295/-, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 1,21,000/-**

Calendar of Events: 1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 03-03-2026. 2)** Date of Pre Bid Meeting on **05-03-2026 at 15.30 Hours. 3)** Last Date for Receipt of Tender Documents: **10-03-2026 upto 16.00 Hours. 4)** Date of Opening of Technical Bid: **11-03-2026 at 16.30 Hours. 5)** Date of Opening of Financial Bid: **Will be intimated through KPP Portal.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Malleshwaram Division, Zone-2, BWCC.

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Corporate Office, MESCOM Bhavana, Bejai, Mangaluru-575 004
Phone: 0824-2885810 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No. MESCOM/COML/RA/6/2025-COML/7497 Date: 23.02.2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Sub: In the matter of amendment to electricity tariff proposed in RP-08/2025 w.r.t. IP set, Commercial & Industrial category.

1. The Hon'ble Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission will hold the public hearing on 25.02.2026 @ 11.00 a.m., at Commission's Court Hall, Bangalore to elicit the views of the stake holders/general public in the matter of amendment to electricity tariff proposed by ESCOMs in RP-08/2025 w.r.t. IP set, Commercial & Industrial category.
2. Public Hearing Notice of the Hon'ble Commission in the matter is available in the official website of the Commission and ESCOMs.
3. For the convenience of those stake holders/general public who are unable to attend the hearing physically or through individual online appearance, MESCOM has arranged for virtual appearance from Conference Hall, Corporate Office, MESCOM Bhavana, Kavoor Cross Road Bejai, Mangalore-575004.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer (Ele), (Coml.)

DIPR/DK/MPL/1660/25-26

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30-plus 1st time MLAs write to Cong top brass for Cabinet berths

'No debutant found place when ministry was formed'

BENGALURU, DHNS:

Over 30 first-time Congress MLAs, including Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's legal advisor A S Ponnanna, have written to the party high command, seeking berths for first-time MLAs in the proposed Cabinet reshuffle.

Legislators who signed the letter include Ashok Rai, Srinivas N T, P Ravikumar, A C Srinivas, H A Iqbal Hussain, B Devendra, Nara Bharath Reddy, Vishwas V Vaidya and Basavaraj V Shivaganga. Some senior legislators have also signed the letter.

The letter was addressed to leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, while copies have been sent to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, AICC general secretaries K C Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala.

"As you are aware, the people of Karnataka have elected 38 members to Assembly from the Indian National Congress for the first time and thereby sent out a clear message that they want to see new young faces in the legislature," reads the letter.

Highlighting that no newly elected member had been accommodated in the Cabinet, they said, "At the time of the formation of the 34-member Cabinet, no first-time MLA was given an opportunity. It is necessary that young, dynamic and proactive first-time MLAs get an opportunity to serve as ministers".

WHAT LETTER SAYS

"At the time of the formation of the 34-member Cabinet, no first-time MLA was given an opportunity. It is necessary that young, dynamic and proactive first-time MLAs get an opportunity to serve as ministers.

Mahadevappa bats for Dalit CM

Social Welfare Minister Dr H C Mahadevappa (HCM) said on Monday that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the Congress high command should choose a 'suitable' Dalit leader as the chief minister one day.

Mahadevappa

Speaking to reporters, Mahadevappa said, "For now, Siddaramaiah is the chief minister. However, I won't say that there should not be a Dalit CM in the future. It must happen in a state. The situation must come for it. The Congress high command, Siddaramaiah and everyone must place a suitable Dalit leader as the chief minister."

Noting that the Dalits are in substantial numbers in the state and favour Congress, he said that someone from the community should become the chief minister.

When asked if there would be a demand for a Dalit chief minister in the next term, he said, "The high command knows about these demands. They also know that the Dalits are the backbone of Congress. The party cannot be strong if it loses its backbone... That decision will happen one day."

Speaking elsewhere, Home Minister G Parameshwara noted that the high command would decide on when there would be a Dalit chief minister in the state.

Responding to Mahadevappa's comment, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who has been vying for the chief minister's post ever since the Congress came to power in the state in 2023, said: "He (Mahadevappa) is our national leader. I salute him from here."

Minister Venkatesh backs HCM for post

Animal Husbandry and Sericulture Minister K Venkatesh expressed his support for Social Welfare Minister H C Mahadevappa, stating he would be personally 'very happy' to see the latter become the chief minister, reports DHNS from Mysuru.

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, Venkatesh, known to be a close associate of Mahadevappa, played the friendship card while referring to the speculation about leadership.

"Mahadevappa is my dear friend. I will be happy if he becomes the chief minister. I wish him (all) the best," he said.

He, however, was quick to add a rider to his statement, saying the post is not currently vacant.

BJP delegation meets Governor to discuss internal reservation

BENGALURU, DHNS: A delegation of BJP leaders on Monday called on Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to discuss the implementation of internal reservation policy, which is pending before the court.

The Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-Classification) Bill, 2025, ratifying the government order on apportioning reservation in the 6:6:5 ratio, was passed during the Winter Session of the state legislature in December last. The bill, however, is yet to be sent for the Governor's approval.

The delegation included Chitradurga MP Govind Karjol, former Union Minister A Narayanaswamy, MLAs Duryodhan Aihole and Basavaraj Mattimud. The leaders congratulated the Governor for his strong stance in ensuring social justice.

Although it has been eighteen months since the Supreme Court's landmark judgement on internal reservation, Karnataka is yet to implement the policy although states including Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Telangana had done so, the BJP leaders pointed out.

The BJP delegation wondered why the government was not considering the 1:6:5:4:1 formula proposed by the Justice Nagmohan Das commission, on the report of which Rs 110 crore was spent.

Questioning the basis for the 6:6:5 formula proposed by the government, the BJP delegation further alleged that a detailed discussion on the issue had not been allowed during the Winter Session in Belagavi.

Siddaramaiah prevented Dalits from becoming CM: HDK

RAICHUR, DHNS: It was Siddaramaiah who stopped Dalits from occupying the chief minister's chair in the state, said former CM and Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries H D Kumaraswamy on Monday.

Congress veterans such as AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Home Minister G Parameshwara ought to have become the CM a long time ago, said Kumaraswamy. "But Kharge was packed off to New Delhi, while Parameshwara's loss in the Assembly elections was engineered in 2013 when he was the Karnataka Congress president. A Dalit could have been the CM of the state much earlier. Why has it not happened even after 75 years," asked the Union Minister.

Queried about his meeting with Parameshwara, Kumaraswamy said, "It was a personal meeting. Nothing even remotely political was discussed during the meeting."

We did not stab anyone in the back, said Kumaraswamy. "But Siddaramaiah left our party when he tried to stab former prime minister H D Deve Gowda in the back," said Kumaraswamy, claiming that Siddaramaiah remained mentally imbalanced till date.

Accusing Siddaramaiah of desperately trying to save his chair, Kumaraswamy added, "Did I incite members of my Vokkaliga community into a riot? I never tried to save my chair by brandishing the caste card."

POWER PLAY

Actor 'Mukhyamantri' Chandru and other artistes in a scene from the play 'Mukhyamantri', staged by Bengaluru's Kalagangothri troupe, in Kalaburagi on Monday. DH PHOTO/TAJUDDIN AZAD

Vijayendra will never be chief minister, says Yatnal

BAGALKOT, DHNS: Karnataka BJP president B Y Vijayendra will never become the chief minister of Karnataka said expelled saffron party MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal. He was speaking to reporters in the city on Monday.

Accusing the father-son duo of former chief minister B S Yediyurappa and Vijayendra of putting on an act, Yatnal said, "They were the ones responsible for the BJP's loss in the Davanagere, Kalaburagi, Bidar and other Lok Sabha constituencies".

Questioning Vijayendra's refusal for permission for the padayatra that he had planned to take out to protest the scam in the Maharishi Valmiki Corporation, Yatnal added, "The minute Vijayendra starts questioning the Congress government on floor of the House, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar threatens to take out the former's 'file', and the Karnataka BJP president goes silent immediately. The BJP has been unsuccessful in informing the public about the many failures of the Congress government".

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Protest over jumbo attack: FIR against 29 persons

CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS: The police have registered an FIR against 29 persons in connection with a day-long road blockade, stone pelting, attempt to overturn a police vehicle, and obstructing officials from discharging their duty during a protest held at Kadabagere in Chikkamagaluru on Sunday.

Farmers had staged a protest with the body of a woman killed in a wild elephant attack on Sunday, demanding a compensation of Rs 50 lakh to the family of the victim. The protesters had blocked the road for traffic. A large number of passengers were put into inconvenience as the movement of vehicles was hindered for about 9 hours on Chikkamagaluru-Sringeri road.

Balehonnur police sub-inspector had lodged a complaint.

CM holds pre-budget meetings with Congress and DSS leaders

OBC leaders seek greater allocation for development corporations

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday held pre-budget meetings with Congress leaders from the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Tribe communities, and representatives of different factions of the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS).

Pointing out that the report social and educational survey report submitted by the Jayaprakash Hegde-led Backward Classes Commission had not been implemented, OBC Congress leaders enjoined on the CM to implement the report that the Madhusudhan Naik-led commission is slated to submit soon.

The OBC leaders urged Siddaramaiah to raise the threshold for the creamy layer from Rs 8 lakh per annum to Rs 12 lakh per annum, besides demanding the resumption of providing pre-metric scholarship to OBC students, which was halted in 2022. Ministers Madhu Bangarappa, N S Boseraju, Chairman of Guarantees Implementation Authority H M Revanna, MLC and the CM's son Yathindra Siddaramaiah, and former Chairman of the Legislative Council V R Sudarshan were part of the delegation.

One of the leaders who was at the meeting confirmed to *DH* that the delegation had sought allocation of more funds for development corporations that fall under the ambit of the Backward Classes Welfare Department. "We have urged the CM to search for, and provide land to people from the 46 nomadic communities who are grouped under the OBCs," the leader added.

The delegation also reportedly sought a one-time waiver of loans taken by people from the respective development corporation of their communities.

Development corporation for Buddhists sought

Meanwhile, DSS leaders are learnt to have expressed their longstanding demand for the shelving of Section 7C of the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan Act that allows the government to expend money allocated under the legislation on education, health and guarantee schemes. Dalit leaders including Mavalli Shankar, Basavaraj Kouthal, Subbu Holeyar, Dr M Venkataswamy participated in the meeting with the CM.

Meanwhile, the leaders are also learnt to have urged the CM to institute a dedicated development corporation for Buddhists.

One of the leaders who was at the meeting said, "Individuals from Scheduled Caste communities who have converted to Buddhism should be allocated funds under the Social Welfare Department, while those from non-SC communities that have converted to Buddhism must be provided funds by the Minority Welfare Department."

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly Owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN: U04010KA2002SGC030438)

No: CEE/CZ/EEC/F-2&3/2025-26/10002 Date:20.02.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal only)

Chief Engineer(Ele)., O&M Zone, BESCOM, Chitradurga invites tender for the following Civil Engineering works coming under jurisdiction of Chitradurga Zone through KPP portal only (Two cover system)

Sl No	Name of the work	Amount put to tender (Rs. In Lakhs) Excluding GST	EMD (in Rs.)	Category
1	Construction of building to accommodate Section office duly dismantling old building at BESCOM colony premises, **Basavapattana (Channagiri Tq.)**	80.91	80,910/-	CAT-1
2	Extension of Circle Office building for accommodation to ladies rest room as per circular & other allied works at Circle Office, BESCOM, **Davanagere.**	59.29	59,290/-	ST
3	Construction of Surface drain and Providing Galuvalium sheet to existing Workmen quarters (Block-I & Block-II) and Officers quarters (Block-I & Block-II), O & M section office at BESCOM Old and new colony premises, **Chitradurga.**	42.3	84,600/-	OTHERS
4	Construction of compound/retaining wall, vehicle parking shelter, all round drain and road at BESCOM office premises, **Hosadurga.**	50.84	1,01,680/-	OTHERS
5	Construction of New Section office building by dismantling the existing section office building at BESCOM colony premises, **Maradihalli.**	76.29	1,52,580/-	OTHERS
6	Construction of drain, Vehicle parking shelter and Galvanized Sheet for RCC Roof Top Protection to BESCOM Section Office Building at **Challakere.**	16.93	42,325/-	OTHERS
7	Construction of Section office Building & other development works at **Hosakere, Gubbi Tq.**	82.89	1,65,780/-	OTHERS
8	Construction of new Section office building duly dismantling old building at BESCOM premises, **C. S. Pura, Gubbi Tq.**	82.89	82,890/-	CAT IIA
9	Construction of Section office Building at BESCOM Premises, **Honnavalli, Tiptur Tq.**	83.03	83,030/-	SC
10	Construction of section office building at **Nonanvinkere, BESCOM premises, Tiptur division.**	83.86	83,860/-	CAT IIA
11	Construction of Section office Building & other allied works at **Holavanahalli (KPTCL Land), Koratagere Tq.**	84.7	84,700/-	SC
12	Construction of section office building and other allied works at **Thovinakere, KoratagereTq.**	84.74	84,740/-	ST
13	Providing workstations to newly constructed Sub division office with allied works at BESCOM premises, **Kodagenahalli, Madhugiri Tq.**	67.78	1,35,560/-	OTHERS
14	Construction of Retaining Wall and other allied works to BESCOM Section Office Building, **Tavarekere.**	54.19	1,08,380/-	OTHERS
15	Construction of building to accommodate Sub Division office duly dismantling old building at BESCOM colony premises, **Channagiri.**	169.49	2,54,235/-	OTHERS
16	Construction of Residential Quarters Block-V(4 tenements) for Lineman at BESCOM colony premises, **Davanagere.**	135.58	2,03,370/-	OTHERS
17	Providing Aluminium partition,workstation to CSD-1 office building and other allied works like Pavers, Surface drain, approach road, Vehicle parking stand at BESCOM OEC Colony, **Tumakuru.**	160.98	2,41,470/-	OTHERS
18	Construction of Section office Building & other allied works at BESCOM Premises, **Byalya, Madhugiri Tq.**	101.69	2,00,000/-	OTHERS
19	Providing workstations to newly constructed Sub division offices (RSD and CSD) and section offices with allied works at **Sira in KPTCL Leased Land.**	160.99	2,41,485/-	OTHERS
20	Providing workstations to newly constructed Sub division office and section offices with allied works at **Koratagere in KPTCL Leased Land.**	135.53	2,03,295/-	OTHERS
21	Providing lift arrangements and connected Civil works at BESCOM Division office, **Davanagere.**	23.72	50,000/-	OTHERS

The prospective bidders interested to participate are advised to register their user ID under website **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and log-in into KPP Portal **on or after 25.02.2026**.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Ele)., O & M Zone, BESCOM, Chitradurga

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Nadoja honorary degree for G Ramakrishna, 2 others

HOSAPETE (VIJAYANAGARA DISTRICT), DHNS: Hampi Kannada University would confer honorary Nadoja degrees on thinker-academician Prof G Ramakrishna, centenarian writer Prof C Mahadevappa and social worker H C Satyan at the 34th Nudi Habba (annual convocation) to be held at the Navaranga Open Air Theatre on the Vidyaranya campus on Tuesday.

Governor-Chancellor Thaawarchand Gehlot would confer the degrees, Vice Chancellor D V Parashivamurthy told reporters.

Row over selection

He said, "We have received two letters stating that Satyan is facing some cases. We have brought this issue to the notice of the governor-chancellor. He has instructed us to confer the degree on him as the cases have been settled."

"We have time till Tuesday afternoon. The honour can be withheld in the last moment if it is confirmed that serious cases are pending against him," Prof Parashivamurthy said.

Highlight

He said PhD degrees would be awarded to 107 candidates and 123 candidates would get postgraduate degrees.

Prof Parashivamurthy said the highlight of this convocation is that C P Shivachandra, hailing from the Mukri community, which has a population of only about 10,000 in the state, has completed undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and is receiving a PhD degree for his thesis titled 'Oral Literature and Cultural Study of the Mukris'.

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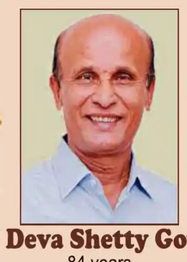

M V Deva Shetty Gowda
84 years
Left for heavenly abode on Feb 23, 2026.
Last rites will be performed on Feb 24 (Tuesday), 2pm at Hanchahalli, Keragodu Hobli, Mandya District.
With enduring love,
Family and Children

SAD DEMISE

GEORGE WILSON
03-06-1943 -22-02-2026
Beloved husband of Daphne Wilson Father of Karen/ Alok, (late) Craig / Brenda Grandfather of Bianca , Samara and Aanya
Funeral Mass on 24-02 2026 at Holy Ghost Church, Richard's Town Viewing 1:30pm Mass- 2:00pm Burial: St. Patrick's Cemetery, Gate no 6, Hosur Road
9880932561

CUTTING-EDGE CUTS COSTS

AI makes Aland's sugarcane farmers aim high on yield

Real-time inputs from sensors help optimise resources

VITTAL SHASTRI
KALABURAGI, DHNS

The censor equipment installed in a sugarcane field in Tadakal village of Aland taluk in Kalaburagi district. It gives real-time inputs to farmers who have adopted AI and drip irrigation, to boost productivity.

The sugarcane growers in Tadakal and surrounding villages of Aland taluk have got almost double yield using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Adopted for the first time in the state, this has enabled precision irrigation, reducing costs by 30-40%.

AI is guiding farmers on when and how much water and nutrients should be given to the crop. The growers have taken a cue from AI technology adopted in the sugarcane belt of Baramati in Maharashtra.

NSL Sugars is encouraging farmers cultivating on 500 acres of land under its purview by providing advance amount towards cultivation cost to them. The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of Baramati and Microsoft are partnering in this initiative.

The farmers have incorporated IoT sensors — including soil moisture probes, flow meters, canopy and leaf-wetness monitors and GPS-based yield trackers — to enable precise, real-time field insights.

Complemented by AI-driven analytics, automated irrigation controls and optimised irrigation scheduling, these technologies support data-driven decisions and strengthen overall sustainability of the crop.

A weather station has been set up within the 3-km radius of the sugarcane fields and the censor equipment provide inputs to Microsoft company about climatic changes, rainfall indication, temperature, chances of sudden rainfall apart from monitoring moisture condition, temperature, nutrients, pests and crop growth through satellite.

KVK officials in Baramati send messages to the mobile phones of farmers through AI technology about pest attacks and water management by collecting these inputs.

The farmers claimed wastage of fertilisers can be avoided and productivity increased significantly by planting sugarcane with a spacing of six feet between rows instead of the normal three feet, which restricts air circulation and sunlight, leading to reduced yield.

Farmer Basavaraj Patil Koralli, who cultivated 18 acres and got an yield of 105 tonnes per acre, said planting sugarcane with a spacing of six feet enhances photosynthesis and improves sugar content in crop.

Water, fertilizer efficiency

Udaykumar Pavadashetty, a farmer from Tadakal village, who is a software engineer, said he has significantly improved water and fertilizer efficiency, resulting in nearly a 40% increase in sugarcane yield with implementation of a comprehensive drip irrigation system.

"To further enhance productivity, I am planning to adopt AI," he said.

The factory is planning to provide training and sensor-based equipment to farmers adopting AI-based cultivation. It is planning to increase area under cultivation with this technology.

"Use of AI will help save 30% water, 40% fertilisers and increase yield by 40%, supplying water and nutrients directly to the crop's root zone through drip irrigation," the factory's deputy general manager Ambrishi Kadam said.

NSL Sugars unit-2 chairman G R Chintala said the factory had decided to give 50% of the sugarcane cultivation cost as advance assistance to growers in the factory's command area.

VIT's cultural fest ends on high note

Dr G Viswanathan (third from left) and Dr G V Selvam (third from right) with students from SSN College of Engineering, Chennai, who bagged the cultural championship trophy at Vibrance 2026.

The four-day Vibrance 2026, the annual international mega cultural festival of Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) Chennai, concluded on Saturday with popular actress Dr Sreeleela gracing the valedictory function as chief guest. Dr G Viswanathan, Founder and Chancellor, VIT, presided over the function in the presence of Dr G V Selvam, Vice President, VIT.

Dr Sreeleela encouraged students to pursue their passions and consider their parents as their first role models. College life is a crucial phase that shapes one's future, she said. "Have fun but also have clarity on your goals. When you leave college, make sure you have a list of things you want to achieve in life and ensure you complete your education well," she added.

In his presidential address, Dr Viswanathan urged students to excel in their studies and aim for greater heights. He advised youngsters to be prepared to work anywhere in the world to achieve success and make their parents proud.

SSN College of Engineering, Chennai, won the overall cultural championship trophy at Vibrance 2026.

VIT's pro vice chancellor Dr T Thyagarajan, director Dr K Sathiyanarayanan and additional registrar Dr P K Manoharan were among over 30,000 participants from prestigious institutions across India, along with students from 11 countries, including United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Tanzania and Cambodia, participating in the event.

The theme of Vibrance 2026 was 'live the beats'. The festival featured over 200 events spanning competitive technology contests, literary competitions, cultural showcases and high-energy games.

Curated by DH Brandspot

Karnataka's bioeconomy hits $39 bn: Report

Bioeconomy, From Page 1

Bioservices continues to grow steadily (about 25.8% share), strengthening Karnataka's position in research services, digital health and innovation-led outsourcing, while bioagri contributes to sustainable agriculture and input innovation.

The state is now home to 1,451 biotechnology and life science startups, of which 218 were added in 2025. About 75% of these startups are focused on life sciences and health-tech.

Besides Bengaluru, Belagavi, Dakshina Kannada and Mysuru have emerged as important nodes in the state's bioeconomy map.

While Bengaluru accounts for about 54% of startups, emerging clusters across the state are gaining momentum. Mysuru contributes around 8.7%, Belagavi and Dakshina Kannada together account for over 9%, while the northern districts remain the agri-biotechnology belt.

Between January 2024 and October 2025, Karnataka attracted $1.14 billion investment across 40 deals, spanning biopharma, medtech, precision fermentation, digital health and agribio.

The increasing share of growth-stage funding reflects rising investor confidence in Karnataka's biomanufacturing and scale-up capabilities, the report noted.

Commenting on the findings of the report, Priyank Kharge said: "With our bioeconomy crossing $39 billion and contributing over 10% to our GSDP, biotechnology is no longer confined to laboratories — it is now a central driver of economic growth, industrial innovation and societal impact."

He also said that the government is supporting the establishment of an innovation park at C-CAMP, advancing a Centre of Excellence for Health and MedTech, and strengthening platforms such as Elevate NXT to back deep-tech enterprises in areas including biotechnology, genomics, AI-driven drug discovery and climate biotech.

Tanzanian delegates train in rly disaster management at city institute

BENGALURU, DHNS

Tanzanian delegates during their training at the Indian Railway Institute of Disaster Management (IRIDM) at Kanminike on Monday. PHOTO: SWR

The Bengaluru-based Indian Railway Institute of Disaster Management (IRIDM) is hosting 15 delegates from Tanzania for a two-week disaster management training programme.

The module was inaugurated on Monday by Hitendra Malhotra, Director General (Safety), Railway Board, at the IRIDM campus in Kanminike, off Mysuru Road. The training will conclude on March 6.

According to South Western Railway (SWR), the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) selected IRIDM to conduct this capacity-building programme for disaster management personnel from emerging economies under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme.

Established six years ago, the IRIDM has trained over 14,000 personnel from various railway sectors in disaster management. It also runs specialised courses for personnel from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Forces (SDRFs), and civil defence units.

The Tanzanian delegates will be trained to handle complex accident scenarios involving bridges, water bodies, and other challenging situations. The programme includes repeated practice using virtual and augmented reality modules for firefighting and trauma management. Physical training incorporates rigorous exercises on railway coaches, with joint practice alongside NDRF and Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel to accelerate learning.

India unveils its first counter-terror policy

Terror policy, from Page 1

"India has always denounced terrorism and its use by any actor for achieving any stated or unstated ends, unambiguously and unequivocally," it said.

Promising to remain committed to international cooperation and collaboration, India will continue to work for a comprehensive framework on terrorism while pursuing PRAHAAR, which aims to "criminalise all terrorist acts and deny access to funds, weapons and safe havens to the terrorists, their financiers and supporters".

To mitigate futuristic terror threats, it stressed investment in technology and partnerships with private enterprise. India would continue its efforts together with the international community to counter the global challenge of misuse of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for terrorist purposes.

On the threat profile, it said terrorist groups are running organised criminal networks for logistics and recruitment to execute and facilitate terror strikes in India.

For propaganda, communication, funding and guiding terror attacks, it said, these groups use social media platforms as well as 'instant messaging applications' while technological advancements like encryption, dark web and crypto wallets have allowed these groups to operate anonymously.

It emphasised on the scope for "further cooperation and collaboration" among agencies while insisting that the domestic counter-terrorism legal regime needs to be amended from time to time to respond to the "emerging challenges".

There is also a "continual need for capacity building" of counter-terrorism units in states to "respond to, neutralise and investigate" terror incidents. For this, the document recommended uniformity in their "structure, resources, training and methodologies" of investigation.

Highlighting the need for associating experts at every stage of investigation, it said terrorist groups based abroad use infrastructure, logistics and terrain knowledge of local outfits for launching attacks.

National actions, coupled with international and regional cooperation, are key elements in addressing trans-national terrorism challenges, it said.

Govt to frame policy to regulate...

Digital content, From Page 1

School management associations and parent bodies have welcomed the move, but suggested not to impose a complete ban on mobile phones. Instead, they suggested restricting the use of social media.

BN Yogananda of the Karnataka Private School College Parents Associations Co-Ordination Committee said: "Social media has become a big enemy of children. Instead of going for a complete mobile ban, the government must look at restricting use of social media. Recent decisions taken by the Australian government can be studied and adopted."

The Associated Management of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka advised for a standard operating procedure-based restriction, instead of a total ban.

D Shashi Kumar, general secretary of the association, said: "It is not possible to control or monitor kids after school hours when it comes to the use of mobile phones and it is being misused more after school hours, and even with support from parents."

Responding to this, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said the proposal to ban mobile phones for children below 16 years is under discussion and that there is pressure from parents to go ahead with the proposal.

"The usage of mobile phones is already banned in schools, and yet mobile phones are being misused. There are countries that have banned mobile phones for children, we are looking at similar policies," said Shivakumar.

Home Minister G Parameshwara, too, confirmed the government's plans to ban mobile phone usage by children. "Several countries have already banned mobile phones for children under 16 years after a detailed study. Even the chief minister is thinking on those lines and a final decision will be taken after studying the pros and cons," Parameshwara said.

SOP prepared

The Associated Management of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka has prepared an SOP and shared the copy with the chief minister.

The key suggestions include: The government must introduce student internet packs; during school hours, only teacher-monitored educational websites should be accessed; restriction needed even on tab, laptops etc.; restrict use of mobile phones by children below the age of 10 years at public places, including wedding halls, temples, malls, parks etc.; mandatory Aadhaar linkage to social media accounts and double-level check by linking the same with parents' Aadhaar; a ban social media for children below the age of 16 years; keep a tab on fake social media accounts by minors; announce legal action for fake social media accounts; ban smart phones in school campuses and coaching centres, and if necessary, only allow keypad phones for safety of children.

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I, VISHWA, residing at No.108, 1st Main, Karnashree Layout, Medahalli, Benglauru - 560049, declare that in some of the documents my father's name is mentioned as NARAYANSWAMY his correct name is NARAYANASWAMY vide affidavit dated 20/02/2026, before notary Manjunath T, Bengaluru

I SHARANYA V INGLEY residing at No. 25/1-18, 9th cross Marenahalli Palya, JPnagar 2nd phase Bangalore- 560078, have changed my name from SHARANYA V INGLEY to SHARANYA SUSHANTH JADAV vide affidavit dated 23/02/2026 before notary Mohammad Hussain. K. Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, YUVARAJAN YADAV, residing at No.1018/1, 2nd Main, 7th Cross, Near Tin Factory, Udaya Nagar, Bangalore North Dooravani Nagar, Bangalore-560016, have changed my name to R YUVARAJAN vide affidavit dated 21-02-2026 before notary Nijagunaradhya T C., Bangalore. Henceforth I shall be called R YUVARAJAN only

I, ANNAVARAPU Vishnu Priya R/O B-212, MC Fortune Apartments, Nallrihalli, Whitefield, Bengaluru-560066 have changed my name to Penugonda Vishnu Priya and also changed my signature, vide affidavit dated 16.02.2026, before notary Yankoba, Bengaluru

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I, PRASANNA PRAHLAD RAO KULKARNI S/o. Prahlad Rao Kulkarni, Residing at No. 29, 7th A Cross, 3rd Block, Near Sharada Varasiddhi Temple, Tyagaraj Nagar, Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560070, changed my name to PRASANNA KULKARNI vide affidavit dated: 23.02.2026 sworn before Notary Ganesh Gowda M V, Bengaluru

I, VINODH Kumar Seshadri (S/O Seshadri), residing at No. 32 (Old No. 1830), 7th A Main, E Block, Bengaluru 560010, hereby declare that the names Vinodh Kumar Seshadri and Vinodh Seshadri refer to one and the same person.

I, SNEHA Shashank Mujumdar, alias Sneha S Mujumdar, resident of Flat 2, Site 42, RMV Extn., 2nd Stage, 560094 have changed my name to Sneha Mujumdar, vide affidavit dated 21-Feb-26 at Notary Ambika S. Benguluru

30L households empowered with rooftop solar, says govt

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi said on Monday that 30 lakh households across the nation are now empowered with rooftop solar under the PM Surya Ghar scheme.

"A proud milestone in India's clean energy journey, 30 lakh households across the nation are now empowered with rooftop solar under the PM Surya Ghar scheme, turning sunlight into savings and sustainability. From reducing electricity bills to strengthening energy security, this achievement reflects the scale and speed of India's green transformation," Joshi posted on X.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the initiative is part of the government's efforts to build an energy-secure and future-ready India.

In his post on X, Modi said: "A commendable milestone in India's clean energy journey! Compliments to all those who have benefited from this scheme and embraced rooftop solar power, thereby boosting savings, sustainability and self-reliance. This scheme is a part of our efforts to build an energy-secure, green and future-ready India."

The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana aims to install rooftop solar systems in one crore households by FY27. Launched in February 2024 by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, it is the world's largest domestic rooftop solar initiative.

Top court rejects Swamy's plea on Tirumala laddu investigation

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to consider a plea by former Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy challenging the Andhra Pradesh government's decision to appoint a one-member committee to review the Special Investigation Team (SIT) report on alleged contamination of animal fat in ghee used for preparing the Tirumala laddu.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymala Bagchi said such an administrative enquiry cannot be termed as overlapping with the criminal proceedings that led to the chargesheet and supplementary chargesheet.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that the SIT has completed its investigation and filed its final report.

Senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing for the Andhra Pradesh government, submitted that the petitioner approached the court with mala fides and was seeking to derail the departmental action.

Swamy also questioned the statements made by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on the row.

The court felt that the petitioner's apprehension does not have a solid foundation. "Let both processes continue strictly in accordance with the law," the bench said.

The petitioner argued that the state government's move undermined the authority of the SIT, which was constituted earlier by the top court itself to probe irregularities surrounding the laddus distributed by the TTD.

Final draft rolls in TN released; 74 lakh voters deleted

Of the 5.67 crore voters in fresh list, women outnumber men

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

The total number of voters in Tamil Nadu stands at 5.67 crore at the end of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, a drop of about 74 lakh voters or 11.51% from the 6.41 crore who found their names when the exercise began in November last year.

When the draft electoral rolls were released on December 19, the names of a whopping 97.37 lakh were dropped. Of the 5.67 crore voters in the fresh list, women have outnumbered men once again—while the number of men voters is 2.77 crore, 2.89 crore are women. As many as 12.51 lakh voters are new voters, while 4.63 lakh are persons with disabilities, and 3.99 lakh are above 85 years of age.

Shozhinganallur constituency on the outskirts of Chennai has the highest number of voters at 5.36 lakh, followed by Avadi in nearby Tiruvallur district with 4.28 lakh voters. The lowest number of voters is in Harbour in Chennai, with 1.16 lakh voters, followed by Egmore, with 1.34 lakh voters.

Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik said that after the claims and objections period concluded on January 30, 2026, 27.53 lakh voters were added to the rolls while 4.23 lakh names were deleted.

With the electoral rolls of 10 of the 12 states and UTs that underwent SIR out, the total number of deletions has risen to 2,44,35,721 or 8.76% of 27,86,76,802 voters at the time of SIR on October 27, 2026. Now, the total number of voters in 10 states has come down to 25,42,41,081.

SIR in Tamil Nadu was a smooth affair with no political party, including the DMK, opposing the exercise vociferously, though the ruling party questioned the timing of its conduct.

DH's field visit in November showed that the DMK was well-prepared with its trained booth agents and ground-level campaign; the AIADMK, though active on the ground, does not seem as ready for SIR. DMK BLAs were present in every booth *DH* visited, but that was not the case with their AIADMK counterparts.

The DMK has upped the game and began preparations long ago to ward off challenges not just from AIADMK but also from new players like Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) of actor Vijay, who is popular among young voters.

Stalin himself called DMK BLAs randomly, seeking updates from them on the exercise.

The DMK has also involved about 4,500 advocates from its legal wing to handle complaints during SIR on the ground and redress them.

Women electors cross 51% in rolls

The final electoral roll for Tamil Nadu reveals that women now constitute approximately 51% of the total electorate, outnumbering men by a margin of over 12.21 lakh.

According to the official data released by Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik on Monday, out of the state's total 5,67,07,380 electors, female voters account for 2,89,60,838 while male voters stand at 2,77,38,925.

A comparison with the 2021 Assembly election data shows that the gender gap has widened significantly over the last five years.

In 2021, the state had 6.29 crore voters, with 3.19 crore women and 3.09 crore men, representing a gap of approximately 10.15 lakh.

'I know my limits': Stalin on leading I.N.D.I.A bloc

CHENNAI, DHNS

Rejecting suggestions from various political leaders that he was best suited to lead the I.N.D.I.A. alliance, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Monday said he "knew his limits" and will never aspire beyond that, in a subtle reaffirmation of his long-standing view that only Congress should head a political combine at the national level.

MK Stalin

"My leader (and father M Karunanidhi) would say he knew his height. I would like to repeat the same, 'I know my limits'. I would remain within that," he told CNN-News18's Town Hall meeting here. Stalin was responding to a question on whether he would assume the leadership of I.N.D.I.A. alliance as leaders like Mani Shankar Aiyar and Uddhav Thackeray have proposed his name.

While Stalin did not elaborate his answer, it is interpreted as the chief minister's way of sending a message to his ally, Congress, that he would continue to be in state politics. The messaging was clear – the Congress will dominate politics at the national level, and the DMK will be the boss in Tamil Nadu – especially as the negotiations for the April-May Assembly elections have just begun.

Stalin's response also sends another message to the Congress that it should play the second fiddle to the DMK in Tamil Nadu as the national party drives a hard bargain. The statement came a day after Congress general secretary K C Venugopal met Stalin at his residence to iron out differences between the two parties.

Meanwhile, AICC in-charge for Tamil Nadu, Girish Chodankar, met DMK leader Kanimozhi Karunanidhi and discussed the seat-sharing for his party. "The meeting (between Venugopal and Stalin) was cordial. The discussions on issues like seats for local body and Rajya Sabha went well but the discussion on seat-sharing for assembly elections remain inconclusive," Chodankar added.

Shah assures Centre's aid for peace in Manipur

Asks CM to focus on rehabilitation of displaced people

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

Home Minister Amit Shah has directed Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh and his two deputies to prioritise rehabilitation of the displaced persons, even as a solution to the Meitei-Kuki conflict remains elusive.

Amit Shah

The directive was given on Sunday evening, when Singh, along with two deputy CMs, Nemcha Kipgen and Lossi Dikho, met Shah in New Delhi and discussed the steps taken by the new government since February 4, when it took charge.

"Shah assured the three Manipuri leaders of all possible help from the central government to bring peace and normalcy in the state. The Union Home Minister further assured the chief minister that all necessary help will be provided by the centre for the overall development and progress of Manipur," said a statement issued by the CM's office.

Singh briefed the Home Minister that he has taken several steps to reach out to both the Meitei and the Kuki communities for the restoration of peace and for the rehabilitation of the displaced persons.

Community outreach

After nearly a year of President's Rule, the Centre on February 4 appointed Singh, a Meitei, as the new CM and Kipgen, a Kuki and Dikho, a Naga, as two deputy CMs. This was part of the Centre's move to restore peace by reaching out to the communities. But efforts to convince the Kukis have not yet fructified, with the Kuki groups remaining firm on their demand for a Union Territory comprising the Kuki-inhabited areas for finding a solution.

Singh visited the relief camps of Meiteis and Hmar communities in Jiribam district recently, but could not visit those in Kuki-dominated districts like Churachandpur, Kangpokpi and Tengnoupal, mainly due to objections by the Kuki organisations. On February 19, he virtually interacted with the Kuki displaced persons in Churachandpur from Imphal.

On Monday, Singh and his two deputies met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP national president Nitin Nabin. Sitharaman assured Singh of financial assistance for the rehabilitation of the displaced persons.

CELEBRATING LEGACY

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President CP Radhakrishan and others during the unveiling of the bust of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, the first and only Indian Governor General of independent India, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

Parliamentary Friendship Groups formed with 60+ nations

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday set up Parliamentary Friendship Groups with more than 60 countries with around 700 MPs — including those from the Opposition House — as members.

The aim of the 64 panels — each with 11 MPs, including at least one woman — was to "deepen dialogue" with legislatures across continents and to complement traditional diplomacy with sustained Parliamentary interaction.

The decision comes amid the Opposition's move to table a motion for Birla's removal as the Speaker, claiming partisan conduct.

Prominent Opposition leaders like K C Venugopal, Gaurav Gogoi, Shashi Tharoor and P Chidambaram (Congress), Abhishek Banerjee and Derek O'Brien (Trinamool), Akhilesh Yadav (Samajwadi Party), Asaduddin Owaisi (AIMIM), Arvind Sawant (SS-UBT), and Supriya Sule (NCP-SP) will lead the panels.

Senior BJP leaders such as Ravi Shankar Prasad, Baijayant Panda, Nishikant Dubey, and Anurag Thakur are among around 30 saffron-party MPs appointed chairpersons of the groups.

The panels also include MPs suspended during the Budget session.

Among the Congress leaders, Venugopal will lead the group with Portugal, while Chidambaram will lead the panel with Italy.

The others with charges are Tewari (Japan), Tharoor (France), Kodikunnil Suresh (Qatar), Rajiv Shukla (Austria), Gogoi (Philippines), Mukul Wasnik (Ireland), Kumari Selja (Mongolia), and Pramod Tiwari (Mexico).

Senior Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has been made a member of the Friendship Group for Japan.

From the BJP, Prasad will lead the group with Israel.

The idea is to allow the lawmakers to speak directly to their counterparts abroad, share legislative experience, and build trust through regular engagements.

Rahul hits back at PM Modi over 'dirty politics' jibe at Congress

NEW DELHI, PTI: A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "dirty and shameless politics" attack on the Congress, Rahul Gandhi hit back at him on Monday, saying what is shameful is the names of the prime minister and one of his cabinet colleagues appearing in the Epstein files, "selling" India's interests under the Indo-US trade deal and the "handing over" of the country's data.

In a post on X, the Congress leader claimed that Modi is unable to sleep at night due to a court case against industrialist Gautam Adani in the United States and alleged that it is a case against the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its financial architecture. The inaction on the matter for 14 months is shameful, he asserted.

Gandhi said whatever the prime minister may do, the Congress will not retreat even an inch and will continue to defend the country.

Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi with Kotdwar gym owner Deepak Kumar alias Mohammad Deepak, in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

Coming down heavily on the Congress over its "shirtless" protest at the just-concluded India AI Impact Summit here, Modi alleged on Sunday that the opposition party turned an international event hosted by India into an arena for its "gandi aur nangi (dirty and shameless)" politics.

"Modiji, you are talking about shame? Let me tell you what shame is. Your name, your minister's and your friend's names appearing together in the Epstein files, being linked to such a vile criminal -- that is a matter of shame. The trade deal you have done with the US, in which you have sold out the country -- that is shameful.

"You have handed over our country's data. You have wiped out the farmers. You have ruined the textile industry -- that is shameful. The entire country knows that the ongoing case against Adani in the US has kept you awake at night -- because it is a case against the BJP and your financial architecture. For 14 months, no action has been taken on it," he said.

"Modiji, you do whatever you deem appropriate for your friends Anil Ambani, Adani and yourself. The lion-hearted warriors of the Congress will continue to defend the country," the LoP added.

Kerala CM in data misuse row after messages to staff

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Personal messages sent by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to the mobile phones of state government employees, addressing them by name and reminding them that the government had honoured its assurances on disbursement of dearness allowance dues, have triggered data theft allegations.

Petitions alleging that the personal data of government employees was illegally used for political campaigning have been filed by a few individuals in the Kerala High Court. The court is likely to take up the matter on Tuesday.

Pinarayi Vijayan

Mobile phone numbers and personal details of employees from the Service and Payroll Administrative Repository for Kerala (SPARK) were allegedly misused to send the messages.

The Congress alleged that the chief minister was "caught red-handed" using official SPARK databases to spam government employees and citizens with election propaganda. "This is a massive breach of trust and individual privacy," the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee said.

The personalised messages are widely seen as an outreach effort ahead of the Assembly polls.

The move comes close on the heels of the government hiking the dearness allowance for employees from 25% to 35%.

Pay commission

Meanwhile, the government on Monday announced the constitution of a pay commission to revise the salaries of state government employees and pensioners. The commission has been asked to submit its report within three months, Finance Minister KN Balagopal said.

The move, coming just ahead of the polls, is interpreted as an attempt to influence voters.

Tejashwi may court Owaisi, Mayawati for RS election

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

After the Bihar Assembly elections, all eyes are now on the Rajya Sabha polls in the state, slated for March 16.

Out of the five seats from Bihar falling vacant in April, the NDA is all set to wrest four, given the JD(U)-led alliance's strength in the Assembly.

Tejashwi Yadav

The suspense remains over the fifth seat, given the precarious situation where neither the RJD-led Mahagatbandhan nor the NDA has sufficient numbers to win on its own.

To win a Rajya Sabha berth, one needs to have the support of at least 41 MLAs in the 243-member Bihar Assembly.

With 202 seats in its kitty, the NDA can romp home on four seats, with the JD(U) and the BJP staking claim to two seats each. After these, the NDA will still have 38 votes, which is three short of 41.

The Mahagatbandhan has just 35 members, including 25 RJD MLAs.

Against this backdrop, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly and RJD working president Tejashwi Yadav has reportedly opened backroom channels with AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi. Tejashwi has reportedly sent his aide to hold parleys with him seeking support.

Notably, the AIMIM won five seats in Bihar in November — mostly in the Muslim-dominated constituencies in the Seemanchal area, which borders West Bengal and Nepal.

Tejashwi is also eyeing the lone BSP MLA: He has reportedly dispatched an aide to Mayawati, seeking her support for the Mahagatbandhan nominee, who is yet to be finalised.

With both the NDA and Mahagatbandhan soliciting AIMIM support for the much-needed numbers for the Rajya Sabha poll, the party is driving a hard bargain.

"Are we there only to help others win a Rajya Sabha election? Why can't the AIMIM throw its hat in the ring? All those 'secular parties' who claim to be fighting the BJP-led alliance should back the AIMIM," said Bihar AIMIM president Akhtarul Iman.

Kerala church seeks micro minority status for Christians

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Kerala's Syro-Malabar church has sought micro-minority status for the Christian community.

Its Major Archbishop Raphael Thattil made the request to Union Minority Affairs minister Kiren Rijiju, who called on him in Kochi on Monday.

The meeting assumed much political significance as the BJP has been making all-out efforts to make inroads into the Christian belts of poll-bound Kerala.

Kerala BJP chief Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who also took part in the talks, told reporters that the minister gave assurances that the Central government would consider the request, and that a Christian-community delegation would hold talks with the Central government on this.

The major archbishop was learnt to have expressed concerns that Christians were not getting adequate consideration in government schemes, including scholarships.

TEMPLE TECH

'e-Tongue', 'e-Nose' to guard laddu ingredients at Tirumala

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Andhra Pradesh Health Minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav on Monday said the state government would procure "e-Tongue" and "e-Nose" machines to instantly detect any quality drop in ghee supplied to the Lord Venkateswara temple in Tirumala.

The decision comes amid the ongoing row over large-scale adulteration of cow ghee used by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) to make the revered laddu prasadam.

These devices, imported from France at a cost of Rs 3.5 crore, will reportedly be installed in a new Rs 25 crore state-of-the-art food laboratory that is under construction in Tirumala. The laboratory, nearly 90% complete, is expected to start operations next month, with the machines arriving by May.

The facility would comprehensively test about 60 raw materials used in Tirumala prasadam preparation, such as ghee, cashews, raisins, almonds, chickpeas, sugar, cardamom, turmeric, and chilli, said the minister. It will also analyse TTD water samples using 50 specialised instruments for microbiology, chemistry, and sensory evaluation.

The construction of the lab, located in a 12,000-sq-ft two-storey building at Tirumala's flour mill premises, began in July last year.

The health department and TTD will jointly deploy 40 staff to manage its operations, said the minister, adding that the project follows a 2024 FSSAI agreement, with Rs 23 crore sanctioned.

The e-Tongue and e-Nose systems can reportedly detect even minute quality variations and adulteration in ghee.

According to Yadav, the e-Tongue system is capable of detecting even micro-level deterioration in ghee and other raw materials by analysing taste patterns with high precision.

Likewise, the e-Nose system functions by assessing aroma profiles, enabling authorities to identify adulteration and quality defects in ghee and other ingredients used in the prasadam.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

A roadmap for safe and accessible AI

The India AI Impact Summit, which concluded in New Delhi last week, was the first such conclave to be held in the Global South, which has so far had a marginal presence in conversations on AI and its governance structures. This was an opportunity for Global South nations, especially India, to be a part of high-level deliberations on the transformative technology which is changing the world. The Delhi Declaration, adopted at the summit, appropriately called for a democratisation of AI. It aligned with the priorities India had set, which included making AI capabilities available to as many people as possible and making the technology "safe and trusted". The Declaration was signed by the United States, China, France, and other major players in AI.

At the summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for an alternative vision of AI, based on open code and shared development. Ultimately, AI technologies must serve the global common good. This is critical to a domain which is witnessing intense competition between nations and companies. OpenAI CEO Sam Altman and Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei refused to hold hands in public at the summit. AI is still a technology in its infancy, and its directions are not yet known. But it is expected to leave a major impact across fields – industry, medicine, agriculture, law, social sciences, styles of governance, and even private and public life, in an unprecedented manner. Major economic powers such as the US and China are leading the race at the moment. Adhering to the motto proposed by Modi – MANAV (moral and ethical systems, accountable governance, national sovereignty, accessible and inclusive AI, and valid and legitimate systems) – will not be easy in a field where geopolitical interests are at stake. However, some fundamental guidelines and directions have to be emphasised for the common good.

India proposes an open, trustworthy global framework. Policies must now rise above narrow interests

According to the government, investment commitments of over $250 billion and research commitments worth $20 billion were made at the summit, where the world's top technology firms were represented. India is entering into partnerships with key global industry players, potentially transferring technology and capital. The country has to push research and innovation with timelines and experimentation tailored for its requirements and context. There is heightened interest and activity related to AI at the level of government and outside it. Startups and innovators will have important takeaways from the AI summit. What the conclave proposed in terms of directions on the adoption of AI will now need to be translated into policies, with trust and equitable access at their centre.

Stopgap teachers and systemic neglect

When Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot red-flagged the acute shortage of faculty in Karnataka's state universities and sought additional funding from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the recent Vice-Chancellors' conference, he articulated a crisis that has long been normalised. What followed, however, was an attempt to reframe the problem rather than confront it. Siddaramaiah himself admitted that many universities were operating with nearly 60% teaching vacancies. But his defence that top global universities function with guest lecturers rests on a fundamentally flawed comparison. In Karnataka, 'guest lecturers' are not visiting experts delivering niche courses. They are temporary, *ad hoc* or contractual teachers appointed against sanctioned vacant posts. They work full-time, receive lower remuneration than regular teachers, and enjoy zero job security. To equate this arrangement with the guest faculty model of reputed global universities is misleading.

At leading international institutions, guest faculty are distinguished academics, industry leaders or public figures and policymakers. They complement a strong permanent faculty; they do not replace it. Can the state government claim that its universities routinely invite such personalities? Even if the intent exists, where are the funds to support this model? Flawed expansion policies have exacerbated the problem. The 'one district, one university' approach has widened the system without creating matching infrastructure or faculty strength. Added to this are special varsities such as folk and music universities, established without a sustainable academic or financial blueprint, further stretching limited resources. Public universities cannot charge exorbitant fees like private institutions; so, the contention that they could generate their own funds is flawed. The suggestion to tap into Corporate Social Responsibility funds is easier said than done, given the lack of institutional support. A majority of Vice-Chancellors are academicians who come with little administrative experience to run large organisations or engage with major corporations.

Karnataka's public universities normalise *ad hoc* hiring as real reform remains distant

Fortunately, the legal tolerance for this *ad hocism* is wearing thin. In January, the Supreme Court issued a stern directive against the mass reliance on temporary teachers. It reiterated that one temporary teacher cannot be replaced by another, described the practice of disguising permanent work as guest faculty as exploitation, and ordered all higher education institutions to fill chronic faculty vacancies within four months. Higher education in Karnataka needs reimagining, not rhetorical justification. State universities must be enabled to produce capable, industry-ready graduates, not mediocrity shaped by neglect. Starving them of funds while normalising contractual teaching is a policy failure. Universities are not budgetary inconveniences; they are temples of education, and they must be treated as such.

SYSTEM ERROR

What the robot reveals about India's education

Regulatory gaps and rising commercialisation necessitate a greater focus on adaptability and social purpose

JAGDISH RATTANANI

While the nation was attracted to the India AI Impact Summit in New Delhi and distracted by the horrendous claims of a university on developing a robodog that was, in fact, imported from China, a different kind of attention was focused on twins who passed out with flying colours in the entrance exams that serve as the admissions gateway to the much-vaunted Indian Institutes of Technology. One is the story of lies presented in plain sight. The other is the story of achievement that comes after much effort and sacrifice, most of it in what has come to be called the exam coaching factories of Kota, Rajasthan, which is troubling in its own way. One is seen as everything that is wrong with India; the other as a high-water mark of Indian technical excellence, claimed by and accorded to institutions like the IITs.

The twin candidates will hopefully go on to do well and make their parents and the nation proud. Yet the two stories – failure of one kind and achievement of another – are equally problematic for an India that has an ever-increasing number of STEM graduates but a very poor showing in terms of creativity, innovation or world-class solutions that can justify the investments the nation and the students make in passing through an Indian university.

We have pilloried the private university that claimed a Rs-350 crore investment in AI-related infrastructure, but some troubling issues ride alongside. How do our regulators allow a university to function with almost every leadership position, academic and administrative, occupied by a member of the promoter family? How does patent filing become a game, as alleged in this case, or how does a paper authored under the university on banging vessels to kill the Coronavirus get written? The incident brought to sharp light how India has slipped into an education system run on high fees by private institutions with questionable credentials. Apart from a few exemplars in the private sector or the public sector institutions that have held up despite immense strain on resources and academic freedom, much cannot be said about the rest of the higher education sector in India.

This is worrying because an increasing number of students study in private institutions. The skew plays out in complex ways by adding glamour and compromising rigour, while the falling investments in public education take opportunities away from those who cannot afford to pay the demanding private sector fees.

Official data from 2021-22, the latest available, shows that government universities are 58.6% of total universities, with 73.7% of total enrolment. Private universities (41.4%), autonomous, degree-granting, and typically with fees at far higher levels, account for 26.3% of total enrolment, and are growing. But this is not the complete picture. Private aided and unaided colleges are 78.5% of total colleges. This leads to the case that the majority of India's higher education is in some form of private sector institution.

What this incident with its shock value highlights is simple: in the absence of strict norms and regulations, education will become (like hospitals already have) money-spinners for a few while the bulk of India will remain uneducated, and therefore, not equipped to support the nation's growth aspirations.

Watching the education sector is particularly significant as India prepares to implement the New Education Policy (NEP) with its expansive vision of education that is equitable, multi-disciplinary, holistic, and rooted in the Indian ethos. These goals are less likely to be reached without public investment and some reorientation towards a balanced view that makes education thrive as a public good and is accessible to all.

Skilled without imagination?

Yet it is unmissable that STEM education, particularly of the celebrated variety, has become an end in itself, as witnessed by the pressures, the cramming, and the hard labour young adults are put through in the training camps and IIT prep schools of Kota and elsewhere. In the celebrations after the twin brothers from Odisha came up with identical scores in the joint entrance exam (JEE) last week, we saw pictures of what was won but also what was lost – the children were put through a lot to fetch the scores that, it is believed, will change their lives (and bring more money to the prep centre the next cycle). But engineers in particular have to reorient in the age of AI.

As AI does all the tech work that was once the domain of engineers, it is only the vision of the NEP that can come to the rescue. We need to build holistically rounded students who can adapt and shine in the new world. Technical knowledge in the absence of context, values, and a community gearing, with the idea of serving the self and using the degree to rush for a job across the shores, is not aligned with the ideals of the NEP. In a fast-changing world, it will not serve the tech specialists either.

The philosopher Martha Nussbaum explains it rather well: "The educational culture of India used to contain progressive voices, such as that of the great Tagore, who emphasised that all the skills in the world were useless, even baneful, if not wielded by a cultivated imagination and refined critical faculties. Such voices have now been silenced by the sheer demand for profitability in the global market. Parents want their children to learn marketable skills, and their great pride is the admission of a child to the Indian Institutes of Technology or the Indian Institutes of Management... I fear for democracy down the road, when it is run, as it increasingly will be, by docile engineers... unable to criticise the propaganda of politicians and unable to imagine the pain of another human being."

(The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR; Syndicate: The Billion Press)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

When life is staged for the feed

Experiences have started becoming evidence

SHAGORIKA HERYANI

I chose the restaurant because it was having a moment. My friend asked if I'd been before. I hadn't, but it had shown up in my social media feed at least three times the previous week. That, it turned out, was the point.

The space was all soft curves and terracotta. Every surface textured, every corner Instagrammable. The whole place is designed to look like someone's impossibly chic living room. I photographed my Martini, took a selfie with our drinks, shot a boomerang for good measure, then finally took a sip. My friend happily posed with me. Content done, we slipped back into conversation, as if the last few minutes had been entirely normal.

It wasn't. And we both knew it.

Something shifted over the last decade. We all felt it, but nobody named it. Experiences stopped being private and started becoming evidence.

Once you notice it, you see it everywhere. The coffee shop, designed less for comfort than for photography; the bookshop that feels more like a backdrop than a place to browse; and the park bench positioned perfectly for sunset selfies. Cities now quietly redesign themselves for documentation. Restaurants engineer lighting. Hotels have staff whose sole job is to help you create "shareable moments" worthy of your followers' attention. Even airports come with designated photo zones.

An entire infrastructure is built around the assumption that nothing quite counts unless it is seen.

The word "curated" has crept into every corner of our lives. Curated playlists. Curated feeds. But this isn't curation. Curation implies judgement, restraint, and intent. This is staging. Everyday life has become content, and we are the unpaid creative directors of a show no one explicitly agreed to produce.

Even private moments aren't spared. We rearrange bookshelves before video calls. We photograph coffee before drinking it. We choose holidays for how they'll look online, restaurants for their lighting, and outfits for how they'll read against a background. The performance isn't forced. It's internalised. Automatic.

The economics have followed the psychology. You can now outsource taste entirely. Subscription boxes for identity. Personal shoppers for personality. Someone else curating your clothes, your home, and even your sense of self. We've handed over authorship of who we are to people with better aesthetics and no stake in the outcome.

And we're tired.

Because the performance never ends. Casual moments require planning. Weekend plans are chosen for narrative potential. Vacations are reverse-engineered from photos we want to take. The question has shifted from "Will I enjoy this?" to "Will this look like I enjoyed this?"

What's been lost isn't authenticity; it is the freedom of being unobserved, even by ourselves. The permission to do something because it pleased you, without translating it into meaning, signal, or proof.

The restaurant was genuinely extraordinary. The food deserved the hype. The Martini was perfectly balanced. The service invisible in the best way.

But I'd already chosen the filter before I'd finished drinking it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Conduct awareness campaigns on online safety

With reference to the article 'Help to friend turns into Rs 7-cr nightmare' (Feb 23), the rise in cybercrimes and subsequent online identity theft, fraud, phishing, and financial hacking affecting citizens of all age groups is deeply concerning. Lack of awareness and weak digital security practices have cost people crores of hard-earned rupees. There is an urgent need for stronger cyber laws, stricter enforcement, and widespread digital literacy campaigns. Schools and colleges should educate students about online safety, and awareness campaigns must be raised in public areas to prevent such crimes.
Suhasini Thapa Mangar, Bengaluru

Educate public

The sharp rise in cybercrimes over the past few years is alarming. Many individuals fall victim to phishing scams and identity theft due to a lack of awareness about basic online safety practices. The authorities concerned must conduct widespread awareness campaigns to educate citizens about cybersecurity. Simple steps such as using strong passwords and verifying suspicious links can prevent serious losses. Cyber safety is essential, and educating the public is the first step towards building a safer digital society.
Ishika Pramod, Bengaluru

Rise above theatrics

Apropos 'AI summit protest: Modi blasts Cong's 'naked and dirty' politics' (Feb 23), the recent reports highlight how quickly serious platforms can turn into political battlegrounds. While protests are a democratic right, international forums should not be reduced to partisan spectacles. Political rhetoric on either side must remain measured. India's global image benefits more from constructive debate than sharp exchanges. Indians deserve politics that rises above theatrics, especially on global stages.
Kasak Jain, Bengaluru

For a fair share

The debate around the 16th Finance Commission underscores a persistent strain in India's fiscal federalism. While retaining the states' share at 41% offers continuity, the growing reliance on cesses and surcharges, which fall outside the divisible pool, effectively shrinks states' resources. True cooperative federalism demands greater transparency.
Nandini Malviya, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

The phenomenon we are seeing at the Centre through the initiatives taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not reached Kerala. The benefits that have reached Kerala are bare minimum, because the state doesn't have a very conducive government.

Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister

During a campaign the air is full of speeches — and vice versa.

Anonymous

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

The jurisprudence of arrest

Judicial safeguards for personal liberty have not prevented arbitrary arrests and prolonged detention of undertrials

ASHIT MOHAN PRASAD

Despite repeated judicial pronouncements, the criminal jurisprudence governing arrest procedures in India continues to reflect elements of arbitrariness and inconsistency. Courts have consistently emphasised that deprivation of liberty, freedom, and dignity must be undertaken with utmost care, caution, and conscious application of mind. The Fundamental Rights guaranteed under Articles 14, 19, and 21 of the Constitution cannot be sacrificed even in grave or exceptional circumstances.

The recent Supreme Court decision denying bail to Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam in the 2020 Delhi riots conspiracy case has reignited debate on the application of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA). Without entering into the merits of the case, it must be noted that while rejecting bail, the Court observed that delay in trial cannot be treated as a "trump card" for automatic release. Charges are yet to be framed, and the accused have undergone more than five years of pre-trial incarceration, raising serious concerns regarding the constitutional mandate of a speedy trial.

In *Vernon Gonsalves v. State of Maharashtra*, the Supreme Court underscored that even within the constraints of the UAPA, courts must undertake a meaningful judicial exercise to determine whether the alleged acts fall within the scope of the statute. Similarly, in *Javed Gulam Nabi Sheikh v. State of Maharashtra*, the Court held that if the State or prosecuting agency lacks the wherewithal to ensure a speedy trial under Article 21, it cannot oppose bail solely on the ground of the gravity of the offence. In *Jalaluddin Khan v. Union of India*, the Court reaffirmed that "bail is the rule and jail is the exception".

The judiciary has also examined the issue of arrest, which confers wide discretionary powers upon the police. In the landmark judgment of *Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar*, the Supreme Court held that arrest should be an exception and not the rule, particularly for offences punishable with imprisonment of less than seven years. The Bombay High Court, in *Chandrashekhar Bhimsen Naik v. State of Maharashtra*, ruled that where an accused complies with a notice under Section 35(5) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), arrest is ordinarily unnecessary. Further, in *Satender Kumar Antil v. CBI*, the Supreme Court reiterated that the discretion to arrest must be exercised sparingly, guided by strict objectivity and necessity.

Procedural safeguards have also been reinforced in *Purkayastha v. State*, where the Court clarified that under the UAPA and Section 47 of the BNSS, it is mandatory to inform the accused of the specific "grounds" of the arrest, along with the right to seek bail.

More recently, on February 2, 2026, the Supreme Court upheld guidelines issued by the Telangana High Court, restraining the police from mechanically registering FIRs over harsh, offensive, or critical political speech on social media without conducting a preliminary inquiry. The Court clarified that criminal law may be invoked only when speech amounts to incitement to violence or poses a genuine threat to public order. This endorsement represents a vital safeguard against the misuse of arrest powers in cases involving political expression.

Overcrowded prisons

The broader context is reflected in India's prison statistics. As of the end of 2023, India housed over 5.3 lakh prisoners across approximately 1,400 prisons, with an average occupancy rate of around 120%, down from 131.4% in 2022. This marginal improvement is largely attributable to efforts by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and State Legal Services Authorities to identify undertrial prisoners eligible for release. The Supreme Court has urged subordinate courts to adopt a liberal approach in bail matters and directed district-level undertrial review committees to conduct quarterly prison visits to address cases of prolonged incarceration.

Disturbingly, nearly half of all undertrial prisoners are aged 18-30, and approximately 60% are either illiterate or educated below Class 10. The Supreme Court receives nearly 70,000 bail applications annually, many of which ought to be resolved by the subordinate courts. The present prison scenario starkly undermines the fundamental principle of "innocent until proven guilty". As early as *Joginder Kumar v. State of Uttar Pradesh*, the Court observed that a significant percentage of arrests were unnecessary and unjustified.

There is, therefore, an urgent need to faithfully implement the safeguards laid down in judicial precedents and statutory provisions. A uniform, liberal, and conscientious approach to arrest and bail would not only alleviate prison overcrowding but also reaffirm the constitutional commitment to liberty and dignity. Mere accusation or suspicion must not become a justification for eroding the spirit of the Constitution, which places Fundamental Rights at its core.

(The writer is a former Director General of Police and former Chief Information Commissioner, Karnataka)

From care infrastructure to women's work: What the Budget signals

AAKASH DEV

India has begun to acknowledge an inconvenient truth about its economy: growth cannot be sustained without bringing more women into paid work. The Union Budget 2026 reflects this realisation in part through investments in the care sector and allied health services. But it still stops short of confronting the central macroeconomic blind spot—unpaid care work that holds back female labour force participation (FLFPR).

Women's work sustains households, enables labour markets to function, and underpins economic activity, yet it remains largely invisible in national accounting. Until this invisibility is corrected, India's efforts to raise FLFPR will remain partial and fragile.

The care burden GDP ignores

Time-use data makes the imbalance stark. According to the Economic Survey 2025–26, over 40% of women of working age are engaged in caregiving activities, compared to just over 21% of men. Women spend nearly 140 minutes a day on caregiving and over six hours daily on unpaid work overall, almost three times as much as men. This unpaid labour does not show up in GDP, but its economic value is substantial. In effect, the economy is being subsidised by women's unpaid time, and this subsidy comes at the cost of their participation in paid work.

The result is a persistent gap in labour force participation. Despite recent improvements, women's participation remains well below its potential, especially in urban areas and in higher-productivity sectors.

To its credit, the Union budget does take steps towards recognising care as an economic concern. Paragraph 54 announces the creation of a strong care ecosystem, with 1.5 lakh caregivers to be trained in the coming year. Paragraph 53 commits to expanding training capacity for allied health professionals, with a target of adding 100,000 professionals over five years.

These measures matter. Care services and allied health are female-intensive sectors. Formal training and certification can convert informal, poorly paid work into stable employment while easing care pressures within households. But these initiatives operate at the margins of a much larger problem. What the Budget does not do is to recognise care itself as productive economic activity or treat its unequal distribution among women and men as a macroeconomic constraint. Care remains framed as a sectoral intervention, not as a structural foundation of labour markets.

What the evidence tells us

Recent macroeconomic research strengthens the case for a more fundamental shift. A paper for NCAER, co-authored by the writer and Prof Ratna Sahay and published in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, models the impact of redistributing unpaid care work and formalising part-time employment. The findings are striking: equalising the care burden between men and women, combined with legally protected part-time work, could raise India's female labour force participation rate by around six percentage points.

This is not a marginal gain. A six-point increase would bring millions of women into the workforce, boosting output, household incomes, and fiscal revenues. The mechanisms are straightforward. When care responsibilities are shared more evenly and flexible, formal work options exist, and women are far more likely to enter and remain in paid employment. India's labour laws and macro policy framework still assume a worker unencumbered by care, an assumption that fits male employment patterns far more than female ones.

Including unpaid care work in national accounts would not merely improve measurement; it would change incentives. If care were recognised as economic output, investments in childcare, eldercare, and disability care would appear not as social spending but as productivity-enhancing infrastructure.

This shift would also strengthen the case for public provision. International evidence shows that investment in care services generates high employment multipliers, particularly for women. It also frees up time for paid work, creating a virtuous cycle of participation, income growth, and tax revenues. At present, India relies heavily on households, and within them, women, to absorb the costs of care. This model depresses labour supply, reinforces gender inequality, and limits growth. Treating care as a public good rather than a private obligation would align social policy with macroeconomic objectives.

Raising female labour force participation is often framed as a social goal. But it is a growth imperative. As India's demographic dividend matures and labour shortages emerge in key sectors, excluding women from the workforce is no longer economically tenable. The Budget's care-related initiatives are a start, but they need to be embedded within a broader strategy that includes publicly funded childcare and eldercare services at scale; legal recognition of formal, protected part-time work; incentives for employers to support care-compatible work arrangements; and systematic measurement of unpaid care in national accounts.

Without these, gains in FLFPR will remain contingent on individual households' ability to cope rather than on durable institutional support.

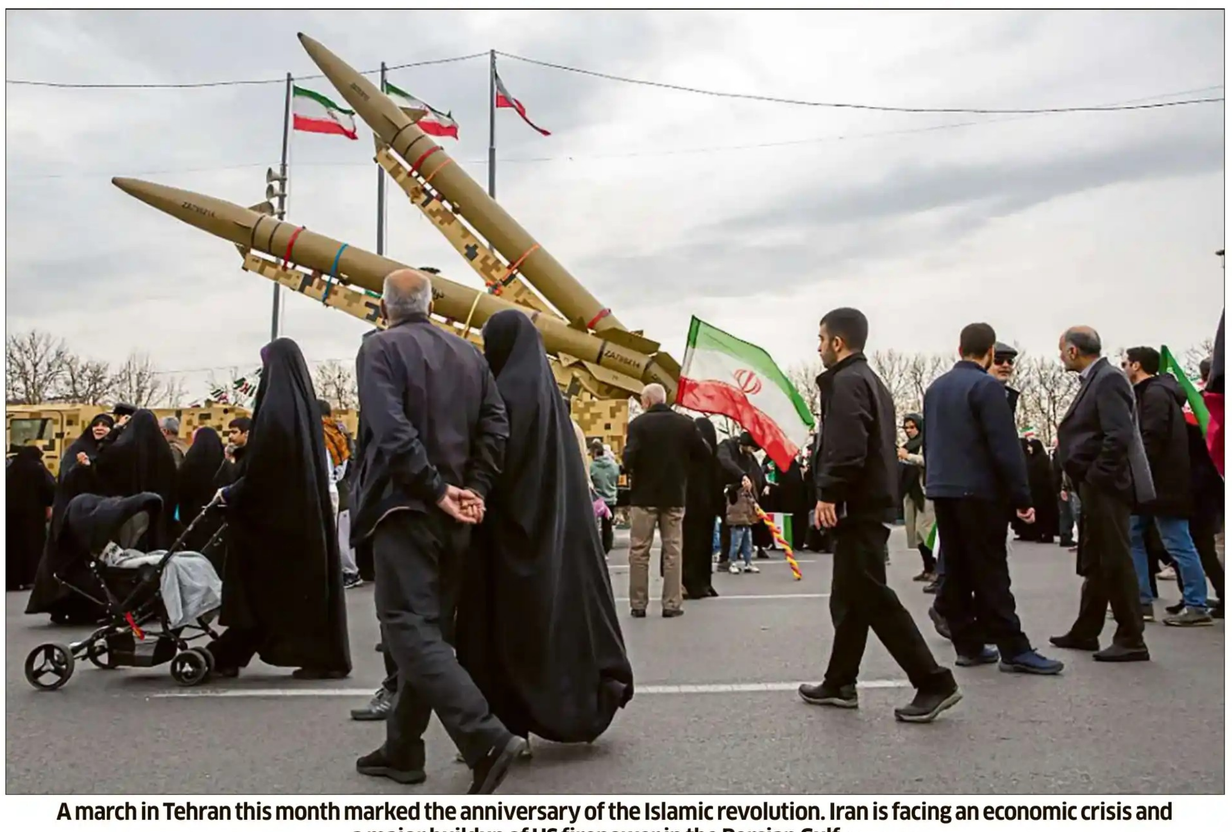
India's growth story increasingly depends on women's work, paid and unpaid alike. But as long as unpaid care remains invisible in GDP and marginal in policy design, women's participation will stay constrained. Recognising care as economic infrastructure is not about symbolism; it is about unlocking labour supply, productivity, and long-term growth.

(The writer is Associate Fellow, NCAER. Views are personal.)

The government in Tehran sees capitulating to Washington's demands on uranium enrichment and ballistic missiles as riskier to its survival than going to war, analysts say

For Iran, refusing US demands is a risk worth taking

ERIKA SOLOMON



A march in Tehran this month marked the anniversary of the Islamic revolution. Iran is facing an economic crisis and a major buildup of US firepower in the Persian Gulf. NYT

Facing high-stakes brinkmanship as American warships and fighter jets mass off its shores, Iran has refused to concede to President Trump's demands on its nuclear programme and weapons — a stance that has bewildered US officials.

The authoritarian clerics who rule Iran see those concessions — which, in their view, could compromise their core ideology and sovereignty — as a greater threat to their survival than the risk of war.

A dangerous mismatch in perceptions between Iran and the United States is why efforts to negotiate a deal over Iran's nuclear and military capabilities look increasingly fragile, experts say, and a new regional conflict seems almost inevitable.

"Avoiding war is indeed a high priority, but not at any cost," said Sasan Karimi, a political scientist at the University of Tehran who served as the deputy vice president for strategy in Iran's previous government. "At times, a political state — especially an ideological one — may weigh its place in history as heavily as, or even more heavily than, its immediate survival."

US and Iranian negotiators are struggling to break an impasse over their respective red lines.

The Trump administration says it wants Iran to agree to zero nuclear enrichment to ensure it cannot build a nuclear weapon. US officials have also sometimes insisted on limiting the range of Iran's ballistic missiles and ending the country's support for allied militias across the region.

For Iran, which says its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes only, nuclear enrichment is a right that the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, upholds and that his officials cannot abandon. And Iran sees possessing missiles that can reach as far as Israel as critical for self-defence.

US and Iranian officials are set to meet in Geneva this Thursday for talks seen as a last-ditch effort to find a compromise before Trump orders a strike. According to people briefed on internal administration deliberations, the two sides will consider a proposal that offers an off-ramp to war: Allowing Iran a limited nuclear enrichment programme for civilian purposes.

Trump's administration views Tehran as so weak that it should accept US demands, regional officials have said.

Last June, Iran suffered heavy blows during a 12-day war launched by Israel and briefly joined by US warplanes. That conflict coupled with biting international sanctions have plunged Iran's economy deeper into crisis.

In January, authorities used deadly force to crush nationwide protests demanding Ayatollah Khamenei's ouster. Some smaller protests re-emerged over the weekend, demonstrating how hostile many Iranians are towards their leaders.

On top of that, the government in Tehran is facing a major buildup of US firepower in the Persian Gulf, including two aircraft carrier strike groups, and a massing of reconnaissance and refuelling jets across the Middle East.

Trump's lead negotiator with Iran, Steve Witkoff, described the president as "curious as to why they haven't" capitulated, in an interview with *Fox News* over the weekend.

The vice president, J D Vance, told *Fox* last week that despite the threat of war, Iranians "are not yet willing to actually acknowledge and work through" the president's demands.

Yet it is the very perception of Iran's weakness that experts say makes Tehran determined to resist.

"For Iran, submitting to US terms is more dangerous than suffering another US strike," said Ali Vaez, the Iran director of the International Crisis Group. "They don't believe that once they capitulate, the US will alleviate the pressure. They believe that would only encourage the US to go for the jugular."

Ayatollah Khamenei has repeatedly stressed his view that Washington's eventual aim is to topple Iran's system of governance.

"Nuclear energy is not the problem, nor are human rights; America's problem is with the very existence of the Islamic Republic," he said in a speech in 2024.

Danny Citronowicz, an expert at the Atlantic Council who previously headed the Iran branch of Israel's Defence Intelligence, said that beyond strategic calculations like the ballistic missiles, Ayatollah Khamenei insists on uranium enrichment as "a pillar of the regime itself." If Iran's leaders concede on those points, "they will actually undermine the existence of the regime itself," he said.

"I think they don't have any other choice than to take the bet on the military side," he added.

Two of the main questions ahead of any potential confrontation are whether a US attack would go as far as trying to topple the political system in Iran, and whether Tehran would be able to retaliate enough to make the conflict painful for Trump, too.

Tehran would probably seek to absorb limited strikes and cap its retaliation to attacks on US bases in the Middle East, as it did last June, according to Farzin Nadimi, a defence analyst focused on Iran at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a think tank.

If Trump chooses to go further, US forces, probably with the help of Israel, would have to race in the first few days to take out as much of Iran's military capabilities as possible to hamper an attempt at a far fiercer and broader retaliation, Nadimi said.

That would require "an extensive effort both by the US and Israelis — not only the air power, but also ground elements — to make sure that their missile threat is neutralised," he said.

Iran would in turn try to mimic the success of the Houthi militia, its ally in Yemen, regional experts say.

In 2023, the Houthis derailed a US military campaign that aimed to stop the group's attacks on international shipping in the Red Sea. The group persistently attacked US drones and international vessels, including an American aircraft carrier.

The 31-day confrontation cost Washington well over $1 billion, and Trump ultimately struck a deal instead of risking a drawn-out military entanglement.

Iran could try to create a protracted and deadly confrontation that could hurt Trump in a midterm election year, analysts said.

One unknown is whether Iran could launch strikes on oil tankers passing through strategic shipping lanes like the Strait of Hormuz, or have its Houthi allies strike vessels in the Red Sea, said Mohammad Ali Shabani, an Iran analyst and editor of the regional news website *Amwaj.media*.

If a new conflict were to drive gasoline prices up one or two dollars per gallon, that could feel very risky for Trump before midterm elections this fall, he said.

US and Israeli forces could deal a quick and devastating blow, as they did last June, when a string of top Iranian military officials were killed within hours and Iran's nuclear and military facilities were battered.

But Tehran learned lessons from that war, Iranian and regional officials say, and has prepared several layers of leadership to replace anyone killed. This aims to ensure that the system survives the conflict even if Ayatollah Khamenei and other leaders did not.

Regional officials speaking to Tehran and Washington say that if Trump chooses to strike, his aim will probably be to jolt the Iranian leadership severely enough to force it back to the negotiating table on his terms.

But several experts said that Iran refused to capitulate to US terms after the last war and that if it survived another, it would probably refuse again.

"To think that a war every time either makes Iran more flexible or facilitates diplomacy is nothing but a delusion," Vaez said.

The New York Times

Inclusion in the toys aisle

AMIRTHAA G R
AND KETOKI MAZUMDAR

Every year, Mattel tries to make Barbie live up to her iconic tagline, "You can be anything." This year, that effort takes the form of the new Autistic Barbie, developed in collaboration with the Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) and designed by Arushi Pratap, an autistic Indian-American fashion designer.

The doll is the latest addition to the Barbie Fashionistas line. She wears pink noise-cancelling headphones to help with sensory overload and carries a fidget toy to ease stress and improve focus. She also comes with a pink tablet featuring Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) apps to support daily communication. Her outfit is a relaxed, loose-fitting purple dress with short sleeves and flat shoes designed for comfort and stability.

There are other subtler changes too. Unlike Barbie's iconic lifted heels, this doll also has flat soles. She gazes slightly sideways to represent potential eye contact difficulties that some autistic people experience. Her elbows and wrists are moveable to help her with stimming and other hand movements that are common among some members of the autistic community.

Efforts to make toys more representative are not new. In the past, such efforts were often improper and ignorant. Mattel itself has produced a few of these, such as Share a Smile Becky, the Down syndrome doll, and "Coloured" Franice and Oreo Barbie.

Barbie, in her classic form, is far from representative. Studies have consistently found that girls between five and eight years old exposed to Barbie had lower body esteem and a desire for thinness. Mattel's release of their Barbie Fashionistas! Doll collection did not change things. The new Barbie came in various "body types, skin colours, and hair textures" and included a wheelchair-using doll and another with skin conditions. However, even these versions remained far from average. The "curvy" Barbie's measurements still reflected a narrow beauty ideal. Barbie has never been an accurate reflection of the average American woman—and she certainly is not representative of the average Indian woman either.

Keeping in mind how this doll itself is a flawed impression of feminism, the autistic Barbie marks a positive step forward. Some argue that the doll feels like a collection of different traits from across the autism spectrum. But that may be precisely what makes it representative and inclusive. The headphones might resonate with those who have sensory difficulties, while the AAC tablet might be relatable to others. Since most of her accessories can be mixed and matched, Astronaut Barbie could have a fidget toy, and the Pop Star Barbie could perform with her pink headphones. This is important, as disabled individuals are usually characterised by their disability rather than their interests and aspirations.

This is not the first time autism or disability has been represented in toys. Adapted dolls with hearing aids or prosthetic limbs and inclusive figures from brands like LEGO have appeared in recent times. Research suggests higher self-esteem and confidence among disabled and special needs children who play with more representative toys. This representation also shapes how other children respond to disabilities. Studies show that when children are not exposed positively to disabilities and special needs in their social environment, they are more likely to react with pity, exclusion and/or dismissal.

Much depends on parents and immediate social environment. Their attitudes strongly influence how children view and interact with individuals with special needs and/or disabilities. Parents of children with disabilities often express a clear need for more representative toys. Among parents of children without disabilities, openness towards disabilities shapes whether their children play with such toys.

Affordability and access remain real barriers. The Autistic Barbie is priced at around Rs 800 on e-commerce platforms — unaffordable for many Indian families. Other adapted toys are not easily available in India unless a huge shipping fee is paid. While "sensory and calming" toys are increasingly marketed, adapted toys such as dolls with hearing aids and transformers with missing limbs are still rare in the Indian toy stores.

This is only possible when social perceptions of special needs and disabilities are more positive, and this change can only happen when there are more conversations about inclusivity. Only then can the promise behind Barbie's tagline—that "you can be anything"—begin to ring true for everyone.

(Amirthaa is a third-year undergraduate psychology student, and Ketoki is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at FLAME University, Pune)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: FEBRUARY 1976

ASEAN leaders favour economic over military pacts

Bali (Indonesia), February 23
Leaders of five non-Communist South-East Asian nations said today that economic rather than military co-operation was the key to stability in the region. There was, however, general agreement that security co-operation between them should continue and indeed be stepped up where necessary, though on bilateral basis. Malaysian Premier Datuk Hussein Onn said, "If we can make progress in economic co-operation, we will have made a substantial contribution towards our respective national and regional security."

25 YEARS AGO: FEBRUARY 2001

Survey admits slowdown

New Delhi, Feb 23
The pre-budget Economic Survey 2000-2001, while painting a difficult economic situation, has warned of a persistent slowdown in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate in the coming financial year and suggested hard measures in the forthcoming budget to rein in fiscal deficit and accelerate ongoing economic reforms. "The economy is currently at a difficult stage. Some problems of growth are likely in the coming year," according to the Survey, tabled by Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha in the Lok Sabha.

OASIS | ACHARYA PRASHANT

The fragile promise of happiness

We are constantly told that the purpose of life is to be happy. It sounds harmless, and very few people ever question it. Yet hidden inside this advice is the seed of lifelong dissatisfaction. The moment happiness becomes the goal, the mind also begins running from unhappiness. It starts moving in two directions at once, chasing one thing while trying to escape another. Slowly, the pursuit itself becomes the disturbance.

The one who is always chasing has already accepted something, though he may never put it into words: he believes himself to be incomplete. And a mind that feels incomplete cannot receive anything lasting. It may feel excitement or relief for a while, but it cannot settle.

Look closely at what usually passes for happiness: A promotion, a holiday, approval, entertainment. None of these are wrong by themselves. But notice how they work. They feel meaningful only because the inner state is already restless and hungry. Happiness is not an independent experience. It is a reaction, a short easing of discomfort, a small rise in the emotional graph produced by changing conditions. And because conditions never stay put, happiness keeps collapsing.

This is not accidental. Happiness, as we understand it today, is largely a conditioned phenomenon. We have been trained to call certain excitements happiness. The thrill of buying something new, the warmth of approval, the comfort of being noticed. Over time, these associations become fixed. Without this conditioning, much of what we chase would lose its appeal far more quickly than we imagine.

Happiness is fragile. It leans on people, outcomes, recognition, moods. Remove one condition, and the structure begins to shake. We know we are happy only because we remember being sad. Something that depends on its opposite cannot support us for long.

The opposite of happiness is not sadness; it is maturity. Maturity is the willingness to see life as it is, without demanding that it comfort or entertain you. A mature mind does not ask for stimulation; it asks for understanding. And in understanding, something stable arises: Joy. It does not depend on outcomes. It arises from insight, from being aligned with what is real rather than what is merely pleasant.

Happiness glitters and fades. Joy remains, because it asks for nothing. To choose joy is not to gain something new. It is to finally rest.

PRAHAAR outlines India's proactive, intelligence-led fight against terror

Flags internet misuse by terrorists, highlights steps to protect critical sectors

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

An official document highlighting India's counter-terrorism policy and strategy has flagged the misuse of the internet by terror groups and the nexus between illegal arms syndicates and terrorists as key challenges for law enforcement agencies.

With India facing terror threats across land, water and air, the National Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy — PRAHAAR — unveiled by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), said that capacities have been developed to protect critical sectors of the Indian economy, including power, railways, aviation, ports, defence, space and atomic energy, from both state and non-state actors.

On the "pro-active" approach, which is primarily "intelligence-guided", it said agencies make sustained efforts to counter misuse of the internet through "pro-active disruption of such cyber activities, online networks of terrorist groups and propaganda/recruitment".

Agencies also regularly disrupt overground worker modules, through which terrorists are extended logistic, material and financial support, it said.

To combat the nexus between illegal arms syndicates and terrorist groups, coordinated interventions are made by intelligence and law enforcement agencies in various states. Special emphasis is on disrupting terror funding networks through the legal framework under Indian laws, it said.

NEW POLICY

- Policy stresses intel-led disruption of terror funding and online propaganda
- Calls for uniform state structures, whole-of-society approach
- Document says anti-terror laws balance security with human rights
- Agencies disrupt radicalisation efforts with the help of community leaders, NGOs

It also said that efforts are underway to establish a uniform anti-terrorism structure in states to ensure "similar and synergistic" responses.

The document said India's anti-terrorism laws give due importance to human rights and the country adheres to the 'Rule of Law', where "laws are just, applied evenly and protect fundamental rights". Multiple levels of legal redressal are available to any accused through an elaborate infrastructure of justice system.

"The due process of law gives a wide scope to the Supreme Court for the protection of citizens' rights. A robust and independent criminal justice system ensures that all are properly represented and get affordable legal services. Besides, there are ample opportunities available to the aggrieved person to contest and file appeals before courts," it said.

The document also acknowledged that terrorist groups are continuously attempting to recruit Indian youth. To counter these efforts, intelligence and law enforcement agencies have been actively disrupting the designs of such groups.

Community and religious leaders, moderate preachers and NGOs have been engaged to raise awareness about the adverse consequences of radicalisation and extremist violence. In addition, youth are constructively involved to ensure that issues threatening peace and communal harmony are addressed, it said.

Emphasising that India follows a whole-of-society approach in countering terrorism, the document said that public-private partnership has been a key component in the fight against terrorism.

'Israel Group' of JeM neutralised after 18-month operation in J&K

JAMMU, PTI: Inspector General of Police (Jammu Zone) Bhim Sen Tuti said on Monday that in a joint operation, security forces have neutralised a seven-member Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terror module, dubbed the "Israel Group", bringing an end to a year-and-a-half-long operation in the Kishtwar belt of Jammu and Kashmir.

Three members of the module, including its self-styled commander, Saifullah, were killed in an encounter with the security forces in Kishtwar district on Sunday.

"The group of seven JeM terrorists had infiltrated into Indian territory in April 2024. Since then, this group was engaged on 17 different occasions. Over the last year and a half, we have successfully neutralised all of them. Sunday marked the culmination of this year-and-a-half-long operation," the IGP told reporters at Kishtwar.

Describing the module as a "hardcore terrorist group", he said, "The group was known as the Israel Group. It was a hardcore terrorist module that inflicted significant damage on security forces and also caused harm to civilians."

Tuti said acting on precise intelligence, the last three members of the group, including Saifullah, were neutralised in the Chatroo area of Kishtwar.

The IGP asserted that the campaign against terror would continue.

"This operation will continue. Our pursuit is long and in the coming time, we expect more successful operations. This fight will continue until the entire terror network is completely dismantled," he said.

India advises its citizens to leave Iran amid rising tension

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Amid a large mobilisation of the US forces in West Asia, the Indian Embassy in Tehran has issued a fresh advisory asking Indian citizens in Iran to leave the country by "available means of transport, including commercial flights".

"The January 14, 2026, advisory is hereby reiterated that all Indian citizens and Persons of Indian Origin should exercise due caution, avoid areas of protests or demonstrations, stay in contact with the Indian Embassy in Iran, and monitor local media for any developments," the advisory read.

Indian nationals in Iran, about 10,000 according to some estimates, including students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists, have also been told to keep their travel documents ready. They have been advised to contact and register with the Indian Embassy in Tehran for assistance.

A similar advisory was issued by the Indian mission in Iran last month during the widespread protests against the regime. The advisory comes as the negotiations over a potential nuclear deal between Washington and Tehran remain inconclusive.

2 UP sisters held for killing father

LUCKNOW, DHNS: Two sisters were arrested for allegedly killing their father in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district following a family dispute, police said on Monday.

The incident occurred late Sunday night in Morna village. Police said one of the accused is a minor.

Investigators said the sisters were upset with their father Ram Prasad (56) alleging he favoured their two brothers and discriminated against them.

Police said the sisters had argued with Prasad on Saturday. Late Sunday night, they allegedly slit his throat with a knife while he was asleep. His body was found near his bed on Monday morning.

The murder weapon has been recovered.

NEET-PG cutoff: SC flags quality concerns

Govt says reducing percentile won't affect competence

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday said that while the Centre was justified in stating that NEET-PG is not an entry into MBBS and that candidates are already qualified doctors, the court must still examine the impact of reducing the cutoff.

A bench led by Justice PS Narasimha noted that the situation was distinct because applicants for postgraduate courses are already doctors. "But still, in the context of competition, we will have to reflect," the bench said.

The court was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the reduction in qualifying marks for NEET-PG 2025-26.

"Adversely affecting the quality of education is what we are more concerned about than anything. You will have to satisfy us on the reduction of the cutoff so drastically, virtually bringing it to zero and non-existence," the SC added.

Earlier, the Centre told the SC that reducing the cutoff will not compromise clinical competence, and seat allotment is based on merit and the preferences submitted by candidates.

In its affidavit, the Centre said that the purpose of NEET-PG is not to certify minimum competence — already established through the MBBS qualification — but to generate an inter se merit list for the allocation of limited postgraduate seats.

It asserted that even after the percentile reduction, seat allotment remains merit-based.

Govt Affidavit

- SC says it's concerned about impact on education quality
- Centre says seat allotment remains merit-based
- Govt cites past precedent to justify decision

Says cutoff change aimed at preventing seat wastage, not lowering standards

A plea was filed by Harisharan Devgan and others challenging the January 13 notice that reduced the minimum qualifying percentile cutoff for the third round of NEET-PG 2025-26 counselling.

Concerns were raised over the decision to lower the qualifying percentile to zero for reserved categories, which could result in scores dropping as low as minus 40 out of 800.

"This measure does not compromise academic standards, does not alter inter se merit, and does not confer any undue advantage upon any class of institutions," the Centre's affidavit said.

"Since the inception of NEET-PG in 2017, percentile reductions have been implemented in appropriate circumstances to prevent seat wastage. In 2023, the qualifying percentile was reduced to zero across categories," it said.

The government said the policy aligns with the broader objective of expanding access to healthcare and strengthening medical infrastructure.

Female foeticide an ugly manifestation of gender bias: Supreme Court

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday said discrimination against women — particularly the girl child — was still prevalent across several parts of the country, and female foeticide was a crude manifestation of such a social malady.

A bench of Justices Manoj Misra and Ujjal Bhuyan made the observations and rejected a plea by a Gurugram-based radiologist for offences under the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) (PCPNDT) Act.

The court pointed out that Parliament had stepped in to not only outlaw sex determination and selection but also prohibit all related pre-conception and prenatal techniques and procedures, making it mandatory to maintain relevant records in a prescribed format.

In this case, the court found that prima facie it had come on record that appellant Dr Naresh Kumar Garg had conducted ultrasonography on the pregnant woman.

OBSERVATIONS

- Supreme Court says discrimination against women is still prevalent across several parts of India
- Hails PCPNDT Act, saying it helps prevent crimes like female foeticide
- Points out that Parliament brought the law to outlaw sex determination and selection
- Says it was enacted to prohibit all related pre-conception and prenatal techniques and procedures as well

> A skewed sex ratio is likely to lead to greater incidences of violence against women and an increase in practices of trafficking, bride-buying etc. It is an effort to save the girl child. The focus of the PCPNDT Act is to protect the right to life of the girl child under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.
>
> Discrimination against the girl child and by extension women is still prevalent in several parts of the country. Crude and ugly manifestation of such social malady is in the form of female foeticide. The first step towards the commission of such an offence is in the sex determination of the foetus.
>
> **SUPREME COURT**

"Whether or not he has maintained the record as required under the law, in addition to nondisclosure of the sex of the foetus, is a matter for trial. Therefore, it is not a case where the trial should be nipped in the bud," the bench said.

The court also said a skewed sex ratio was likely to lead to greater incidences of violence against women and an increase in practices of trafficking and bride-buying. "It is an effort to save the girl child. The focus of the PCPNDT Act is to protect the right to life of the girl child under Article 21 of the Constitution," said the bench.

The bench highlighted that the Act had been brought to prevent such crimes and align with the global perspective of a discrimination-free world.

While declining to interfere with a Punjab and Haryana High Court order allowing prosecution, the SC, however, found fault with the procedure adopted in the raid conducted against the radiologist.

Apex court calls 2018 cow vigilantism ruling 'unmanageable'

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday said its 2018 judgment issuing "general directions" to the Centre and states to prevent and prosecute cow vigilantism and mob violence was "unmanageable", as it refused to entertain a contempt petition over its non-implementation.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said, "If somebody's rights are infringed or some action is taken in excess of the protection of law, then their rights must be protected. Immediate action must be taken in such cases."

The SC said in the 2018 Tehseen Poonawalla case, the court had only laid down general principles of law for authorities to comply with, and for citizens to invoke in case of violation of their rights. In the event of any breach of rights, the public has a remedy in law through the appropriate courts.

The court was hearing a contempt petition filed by Samastha Kerala Jamiathul Ulema over non-compliance with directions issued in its 2018 judgment.

LEGAL REMEDIES

- Contempt petition by Samastha Kerala Jamiathul Ulema dismissed
- SC says remedies lie in law, not contempt petitions
- Reiterates that citizens can seek remedies through appropriate forums

"How many contempt petitions will be there? Sorry, we are not entertaining the plea," the SC said.

In its 2018 judgment, the court had issued a series of guidelines to states and police forces to prevent communal violence and lynchings. A three-judge bench headed by then Chief Justice Dipak Misra had directed the police to register FIRs and prosecute perpetrators without delay, while laying down preventive, remedial and punitive measures to tackle lynching.

The petitioner alleged non-compliance with directions issued in the case. The court, however, dismissed the plea, granting liberty to the petitioner to pursue the legal remedies available in law.

In its 2018 judgment, the court had observed, "Lynching and mob violence are creeping threats that may gradually take the shape of a Typhon-like monster, as evidenced by the rising wave of recurring incidents by frenzied mobs across the country, instigated by intolerance and misinformed by circulation of fake news and false stories."

The court had also directed states to designate a nodal officer, not below the rank of Superintendent of Police, to prevent incidents of mob violence and lynching.

What about other Muslim OBCs: SC on PIL for quota for Pasmanda

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Supreme Court on Monday sought details of backward communities among Muslims while hearing a plea seeking quota in jobs and admissions under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category for 'Pasmanda Muslims'.

"What about the other Muslim OBCs? The OBC is not only a social status factor, but an economic factor is also there," a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi asked senior advocate Anjana Prakash, who was representing petitioner Mohd Waseem Saifi.

The PIL sought a 10 per cent quota for Pasmanda Muslims by sub-categorising the OBCs in terms of the Ranganath Misra Commission report.

The bench said it has to consider whether Pasmandas are statistically the only backward classes.

"At the cost of other poor muslims, you only want to promote Pasmandas.... Where is the homework on how many total muslims are backward," the CJI asked.

Senior lawyer Anjana Prakash said that she will file a note in response to the queries.

Relisting of the plea

The bench then ordered relisting of the plea after four weeks.

Prakash, at the outset, urged the bench to tag the PIL with another pending case relating to the issue of whether Muslims in Andhra Pradesh can be given four per cent reservation under the socially and educationally backwards classes.

The senior lawyer said that 'Pasmanda' Muslims are poor and deserve to be granted quota benefits under the OBC category.

A constitution bench is considering the appeal of the state government against the 2005 decision of the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

It had struck down the Andhra Pradesh Reservation of Seats in the Educational Institutions and of appointments/posts in the Public Services under the State to Muslim Community Act, 2005.

Societal faultlines are deeply rooted: Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

HYDERABAD, DHNS

Supreme Court judge Justice Ujjal Bhuyan said on Saturday that while constitutional courts continued to advocate for constitutional morality, the reality was that societal faultlines were deeply rooted even 75 years after Independence.

Speaking at a seminar organised by the Telangana Judges Association and the Telangana State Judicial Academy in Hyderabad on the theme Constitutional Morality and Role of District Judiciary, he shared how his daughter's friend was denied accommodation because of her religious identity.

"My daughter's friend is doing her PhD from a private university in Noida. She was looking for an accommodation. She approached a woman running a working women's hostel in her building in South Delhi. The landlady asked her what her name was. When she told her name, which was quite ambivalent, the landlady asked her surname. When she said that, it revealed her Muslim identity. The landlady told her quite bluntly that accommodation was not available, and that she should search somewhere else," said Justice Bhuyan.

Explaining the concept of constitutional morality, Justice Bhuyan said it was a benchmark that the Constitution expects everyone to adhere to. "But the morality we practice at home is often at variance with what the Constitution expects us to practice," he said.

The judge also recalled how people refused to send their kids to government schools because a Dalit woman cooked meals.

He said these examples were "just the tip of iceberg, revealing how deep the societal faultlines are".

CLIMATE CURRENTS

Oceans key to limiting global drought spread: Study

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

A new study on global droughts over the past century suggests that ocean temperature patterns play a key role in limiting the simultaneous spread of droughts worldwide. The research offers crucial insights into climate patterns, helping to safeguard global agriculture and stabilise food markets.

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGN) have suggested that ocean temperature patterns help limit the global spread of droughts. The findings have been published in 'Communications Earth & Environment'.

The study has analysed global climate data from 1901 to 2020 and found that synchronised droughts affected between 1.8% and 6.5% of global land, far lower than earlier claims that one-sixth of the planet could dry out at once.

The study, led by Udit Bhatia, with co-authors from IITGN and the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Germany, examined how droughts in different parts of the world align in time and what controls their spread. "We treated drought onsets as events in a global network. If two distant regions entered drought within a short time window, they were considered synchronised," explained Bhatia.

The team identified thousands of such "drought hubs" in Australia, South America, southern Africa and parts of North America. They analysed historical yields of wheat, rice, maize and soybean to assess how moderate drought affected food production.

The study suggests that natural climate processes, especially changes in sea-surface temperatures in the Pacific and other oceans, limit how far and how uniformly droughts can spread.

A major driver of these shifts is the El Nino-Southern Oscillation, a natural warming-cooling cycle in the Pacific Ocean that reshapes rainfall worldwide.

During El Nino years, Australia becomes a prominent drought hub, while other regions respond differently. During La Nina, drought patterns shift again, often becoming more geographically dispersed," the study says.

Drug regulator inspects 90% of cough syrup makers, finds compliance lapses

MUMBAI, REUTERS: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has inspected nearly 90% of the country's cough syrup makers and found compliance lapses, a top official said on Monday, amid heightened scrutiny after India-made syrups were linked to the deaths of children in the country and abroad.

The inspections follow the discovery of a brand of cough syrup contaminated with diethylene glycol that was linked to the deaths of 24 children in October last year. The product, named Coldrif, was made by Sresan Pharmaceutical, based in Tamil Nadu.

"We took serious actions on serious non-compliances, and our belief is that the rot of cough syrup manufacturing will be removed," Drugs Controller General of India Rajeev Raghuvanshi said at the IPA 11th Global Pharmaceutical Quality Summit.

The regulator is looking to fix issues around cough syrup products, he said, without providing a timeline.

The agency is under pressure to tighten oversight of the $42 billion pharma industry, dominated by small manufacturers, after India-made cough syrups have been tied to the deaths of more than 140 children in Africa and Central Asia since 2022, denting its reputation as the "pharmacy of the world".

UNDER THE LENS

- India-made cough syrups linked to child deaths in India and abroad
- Lapses include breaches of good practices, failure to test incoming raw materials among others
- Regulator aims for FDA-level standards, plans staffing and AI use

About 90% of all cough syrup makers, around 1,100, had been inspected, Raghuvanshi said, and pointed to breaches of good manufacturing practices, failure to test incoming raw materials and use of invalid methods or processes.

He did not name the companies found non-compliant.

The regulator has also inspected an additional 1,250 drug manufacturing units to evaluate risks, a practice begun in 2022, he said, but declined to say how many had compliance issues or were forced to halt operations temporarily.

IAF grounds 30 Tejas jets for checks after recent accident

IAF and aircraft maker carrying out root-cause analysis; HAL downplays incident

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Over 30 Tejas Light Combat Aircraft of the Indian Air Force have been put under "routine maintenance check" following a recent accident that led to an injury of the pilot, sources said here on Monday.

The IAF and the aircraft's manufacturer, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, are carrying out the "root cause analysis" and subsequent actions will be taken based on the analysis.

This is the second accident of the indigenous combat jet in recent months, even though its manufacturer, HAL, downplayed the incident.

Asked about the grounding of the fleet following the accident, sources refused to comment. The IAF currently operates two squadrons of the first-generation Tejas LCA.

The accident happened earlier this month at a forward base where the Tejas LCA was undertaking training sorties. The accident is suspected to be due to problems in the braking system, but there have been no official words from the IAF and HAL.

UNDER LENS

- The IAF currently operates two squadrons of the first-generation Tejas LCA
- The accident happened earlier this month at a forward base where the Tejas LCA was undertaking training sorties.
- The first Tejas crash happened in March 2024

In a brief statement, the manufacturer said there has been no reported crash of the LCA Tejas, and the event in question was a "minor technical incident on ground".

"LCA Tejas maintains one of the world's best safety records among contemporary fighter aircraft. As a standard operating procedure, the issue is being analysed in depth, and HAL is working closely with the IAF for a speedy resolution," it said.

The accident happened within a few months of the homegrown combat aircraft crashing in a ball of fire at Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai in November, killing the pilot, Wing Commander Namansh Syal, in front of an audience.

The first Tejas crash happened in March 2024 near Jaisalmer, but fortunately the pilot managed to eject safely.

HAL has so far supplied 38 first-generation Tejas LCAs, and delivery of more advanced Tejas LCA Mk-1As is yet to begin.

Pak-based gangster posts video of Punjab cops' killing

CHANDIGARH, PTI: A day after two police personnel were found shot dead at a checkpost in Gurdaspur near the Indo-Pak border, a Pakistan-based gangster posted on social media a purported video showing an unidentified shooter firing at one of the cops at point-blank range.

The same unverified video, posted by gangster Shahzad Bhatti, was also shared by an outfit calling itself Tehreek-e-Taliban Hindustan, which had claimed responsibility for the killings on Sunday.

Punjab police remained tight-lipped on the claims, with a senior police officer saying that they are probing all angles.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who has come under fresh attack from the Opposition over the incident, said on Monday that the investigation was underway and announced an ex-gratia payment of Rs 1 crore each for the kin of two police personnel.

In the unverified video, the shooter holding a weapon could be seen shooting Assistant Sub-Inspector Gurnam Singh.

The bodies of ASI Singh and Home Guard Ashok Kumar, who were posted at Adhian, about 2 km from the international border, were found inside the checkpost on Sunday.

Bihar IPS officer held over 'custodial torture' of ex-MP

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

A team from the Andhra Pradesh Police arrested Bihar cadre IPS officer Sunil Naik in connection with the alleged custodial torture of K Raghurama Krishna Raju, then a YSRCP MP and now Deputy Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, during his 2021 arrest.

Naik is one of several accused in a case registered by Andhra Pradesh Police in July 2024, based on a complaint from Raju. At the time, Raju a YSRCP MP, alleged he was tortured and subjected to an attempt on his life while in police custody. He was arrested during the YSRCP regime for alleged derogatory remarks against the then chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Naik, who served as Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Crime Investigation Department (CID) in Andhra Pradesh, was on deputation from the Bihar cadre. After the 2024 change of government, he returned to Bihar and now serves as Inspector General of the Fire Services Department.

The case also names former CID chief PV Sunil Kumar and former state intelligence chief P S R Anjaneyulu as accused numbers one and two, with Jagan, YSRCP chief, as accused number three. Raghurama Krishna Raju alleged custodial torture during his 2021 arrest by these IPS officers at Jagan's behest.

Court rejects request

However, a Patna court rejected the transit remand request filed by Andhra Pradesh police to bring Naik to Guntur on Monday. According to available details, a team of the Andhra Pradesh police reached Naik's residence in Patna at around 6 am on Monday and took him into custody.

Naik was subsequently produced before the jurisdictional court in Patna for transit remand to Andhra Pradesh. The court rejected the transit remand application on multiple grounds.

MP to get 8 more cheetahs from Africa on Feb 28; country's big cat count to touch 46

SHEOPUR (MP), PTI: Eight more cheetahs from Africa will be airlifted to Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh on February 28, taking the number of these big cats in India to 46, officials said on Monday.

The batch from Botswana, comprising six females and two males, will reach Gwalior on an Indian Air Force (IAF) plane and then be ferried by helicopters to KNP at around 9:30 am on February 28, MP Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) Subharanjan Sen told PTI.

This is the third batch of cheetahs being brought in from Africa, after previous introductions from Namibia and South Africa.

Cheetah Project Field Director Uttam Sharma said that enclosures have been prepared at KNP, where the animals will remain in quarantine for about a month. "Five helipads have been built for their safe landing, and IAF helicopters have already completed trial runs. The arrival of more cheetahs will strengthen India's cheetah revival programme. With the support of the central government, we aim to increase the population to 50," Sharma asserted.

The cheetah, the world's fastest land animal, went extinct in India nearly seven decades ago.

Eight cheetahs were first flown from Namibia in September 2022, followed by 12 from South Africa in February 2023.

Last year, India saw the birth of 12 cubs, though six, including three cubs, did not survive. This year, between February 7 and February 18, eight cubs were born in two litters.

In all, 39 cubs have been born at KNP since 2023, of which 27 have survived.

Namibia-born Jwala & Aasha, South Africa-born Gamini, Veera & Nirva, and India-born Mukhi have all produced litters at KNP, officials said.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

I A MOE'S MEAT APP?
YEP! IT'S NEW! SEE? JUST DOWNLOAD IT ON YOUR PHONE!
I PROMISE TO GIVE PERSONAL TURKEY UPDATES DAILY
HMMM... DAILY?
OR IN HIS CASE...HOURLY

Hagar The Horrible

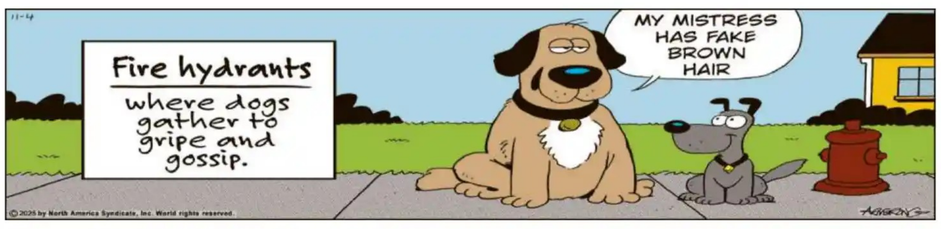
I ACCEPTED AN INVITATION FOR DINNER WITH A COUSIN AND HIS FAMILY, AND NOW I'M DREADING IT!
LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE!
THE MORE YOU DREAD IT, THE HAPPIER YOU'LL BE WHEN YOU CANCEL!

Beetle Bailey

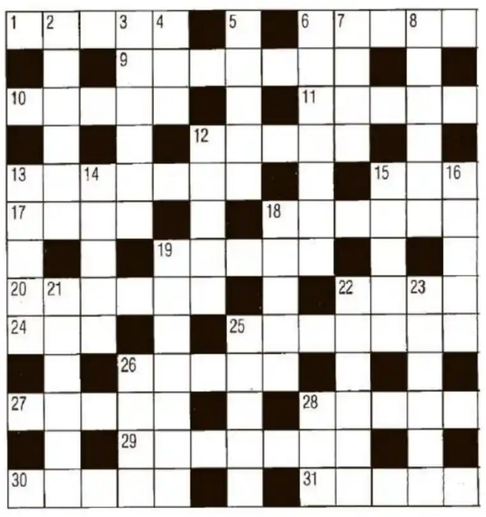
Peanuts

"DEAR CONTRIBUTOR"
"THANK YOU FOR SUBMITTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT"
"WE THINK YOU HAVE A GREAT FUTURE IN WRITING"
"LIKE MAYBE ADDRESSING ENVELOPES!"

Marvin



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12360



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
1 Is to prosecute as the outcome (5)
6 Assume you'll get a pint at a party (5)
9 To burden the fit, fiscally (7)
10 To call it a conk is not so funny (5)
11 Animal taken for a trip? (5)
12 He has a couple of supporters going round (5)
13 Arranged seats in place (7)
15 In France, said to be a day boy? (3)
17 Repeated thanks upon parting (2-2)
18 Is in the balance when you fight (6)
19 Cut across the meadow (5)
20 Mature fellow given a fresh start (6)
22 In pickles, does it make many unwell? (4)
24 The friend dad left behind (3)
25 Means, possibly, largesse? (7)
26 Nick lived in backwardness (5)
27 A refusal, in any case, will displease (5)
28 John from Majorca (5)
29 It's very wrong for Lew to get upset by some oaf (4,3)
30 What it is to have a piano (5)
31 To go wrong, in my case, is rather jolly! (5)

DOWN
2 Moonlight music? (6)
3 More work from Sir Thomas (6)
4 One must do so or die in the attempt (3)
5 A spare part is capital! (5)
6 Changed 'alerted' to 'related', perhaps? (7)
7 How to address an expensive woman (4)
8 Simper stupidly as one prepares (6)
12 Beneath the elbow? (5)
13 Dismiss with a difficult question? (5)
14 In the least degree a giant! (2,3)
15 Figure it to follow the archaeological work (5)
16 Everybody on the street will stop working (5)
18 Beer up? That's fine! (5)
19 A day regarded as well fixed (7)
21 Nearer to being a breadwinner? (6)
22 Open letters after a time (6)
23 Working party? (6)
25 The girl I call for? (5)
26 In Ireland, suffering from depression? (4)
28 She's kept quiet (3)

ACROSS
1 Eat greedily (5)
6 Untrue (5)
9 Book collection (7)
10 Urge, incite (3,2)
11 Weird (5)
12 Hoodwinks (5)
13 Exhaustion (7)
15 Insect (3)
17 Sour-tasting substance (4)
18 Private evening party (6)
19 Jeans fabric (5)
20 Whips (6)
22 Lodgings (4)
24 Attempt (3)
25 Group of four (7)
26 Water lily (5)
27 Fulcrum (5)
28 Saline (5)
29 Normal (7)
30 Gives food to (5)
31 Sorts (5)

DOWN
2 High-quality brandy (6)
3 Excessively ornate (6)
4 Flipper (3)
5 Quarrel (5)
6 Liberty (7)
7 Yes votes (4)
8 Smother (6)
12 The fists, slang (5)
13 Failing, defect (5)
14 Slightly drunk (5)
15 Apple, for example (5)
16 Raising agent (5)
18 Bodily cavity (5)
19 Relegates (7)
21 Turn up (6)
22 Doleful (6)
23 Mild (6)
25 Wait in line (5)
26 Nobleman (4)
28 Was seated (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12359

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 3, Co-u-ld 8, Strip 10, Ar-M-ed 11, Bus 12, Senna 13, Lam-prey 15, A-men-D 18, Lea 19, G-range 21, Wax-work 22, T-O-ry 23, Peru 24, Pranged 26, Gas-he'd 29, Due (dew) 31, Enter 32, Temp-ted 34, Auger 35, Ion 36, Fours 37, Unwed 38, Tenth.
DOWN: 1, At bay 2, Di's-play 4, OBE-y 5, Lan-ark 6, Dram-a 7, Be-ing 9, Rum 12, Sea-ward 14, R-ex 16, Ended 17, Deb-u-t 19, Grande-r 20, Stage 21, Wrist 23, Peeping 24, Peruse 25, Gum 27, Anton(y) 28, Hear-T 30, Renew 32, (Tele)Text 33, Tow.

EASY
ACROSS: 3, Oscar 8, Feral 10, Bison 11, Col 12, Salad 13, Cockpit 15, Cedar 18, Bin 19, Furore 21, Linctus 22, Agog 23, Cell 24, Arsenal 26, Emerge 29, Rip 31, Eerie 32, Cabinet 34, Snail 35, Top 36, Moped 37, Fades 38, Races.
DOWN: 1, Decoy 2, Talk big 4, Swat 5, Abacus 6, Rider 7, Molar 9, Roc 12, Sincere 14, Pin 16, Dowel 17, Reels 19, Funeral 20, Payee 21, Loser 23, Capital 24, Agenda 25, Nib 27, Melon 28, Riser 30, Repel 32, Cite 33, Nod.

◆SU-DO-KU-6838◆

6		7			9			
			4	8	7			
	5		6					
5	1					3	4	
	6	8				9	5	
	2	4					7	8
					4		9	
			7	9	2			
			8			6		7

hard

SOLUTION TO 6837

7	9	4	1	5	8	6	3	2
5	6	2	3	4	9	7	1	8
3	8	1	6	7	2	5	9	4
4	1	9	2	8	5	3	6	7
6	7	8	4	9	3	1	2	5
2	3	5	7	6	1	4	8	9
9	5	3	8	1	7	2	4	6
1	4	7	9	2	6	8	5	3
8	2	6	5	3	4	9	7	1

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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S1 F4 R1 T1 T1 O1 O1

E1 L1 R1 P3 N1 A1 I1 — Triple Word Score

L1 D2 L1 E1 L1 W4 S1

N1 D2 E1 U1 U1 R1 K5 — 4th Letter Double

RACK 1 RACK 2 RACK 3 RACK 4

PAR SCORE 70-80
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

B3 A1 Z10 A1 A1 R1
F4 E1 C3 U1 N1 D2
I1 S1 O1 M3 E1 R1 S1
F4 O1 X8 F4 I1 R1 E1

RACK 1 = 51
RACK 2 = 12
RACK 3 = 59
RACK 4 = 90
JUDD'S TOTAL 212

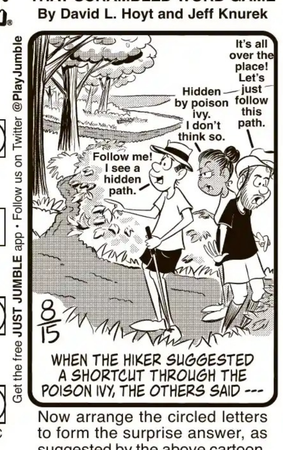
PAR SCORE 140-150

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ACTNE
MHESA
ROOHCT
RRTVEE


It's all over the place! Let's just follow this path.
Hidden by poison ivy, I don't think so.
Follow me! I see a hidden path.
WHEN THE HIKER SUGGESTED A SHORTCUT THROUGH THE POISON IVY, THE OTHERS SAID ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

_____ _____!

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: SLOSH FINAL OUTAGE UNWISE
Answer: Thinking of the Milky Way Galaxy as a parent, our local star is — ONE OF ITS "SUNS"

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HITORI-3292

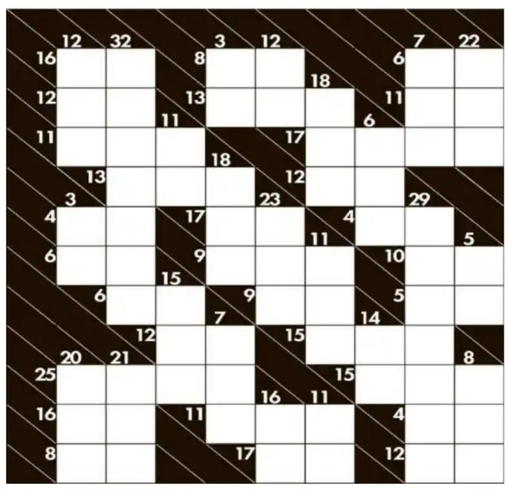
4	8	5	3	3	6	2	5
8	8	2	4	2	7	3	1
4	2	3	3	4	1	7	6
5	2	1	8	2	2	4	5
3	1	7	3	8	4	4	2
6	4	3	2	3	3	1	7
5	3	6	1	7	2	5	8
7	5	3	3	1	5	8	3

SOLUTION TO 3291

■	5	8	■	1	4	■	3
2	1	■	6	7	■	8	5
■	8	6	5	4	3	2	7
6	3	■	2	5	■	4	■
4	■	5	■	3	8	■	6
5	6	2	3	■	1	7	4
3	■	7	■	2	5	■	1
■	7	4	1	■	2	5	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3292



SOLUTION TO 3291

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3837

■					1			8
8	■		2				■	
	2	4				■		3
9	5		6		■	1		
				■				
	1	6	9		■		3	
		■			8	■	9	
2	■		7		5	4	■	
7					3	5		■

SOLUTION TO 3836

5	2	3	9	8	1	6	7	4
6	7	4	5	3	2	1	9	8
8	1	9	7	4	6	2	3	5
7	4	2	8	1	5	9	6	3
3	5	1	2	6	9	4	8	7
9	6	8	3	7	4	5	2	1
4	9	7	1	2	8	3	5	6
2	8	6	4	5	3	7	1	9
1	3	5	6	9	7	8	4	2

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Too early to assess impact of US tariff change on economy: FM

Sitharaman tells banks to focus on core business

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Commerce Ministry is reviewing the evolving trade situation following the US Supreme Court ruling on tariffs and it is too early to assess its impact on the Indian economy, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday.

Addressing a press conference, the FM said the clarity on the impact of the changes in US tariff rates would emerge only after detailed review and consultations in the coming days. "On the trade, particularly aside from the Indian economy in general, the Commerce Ministry is reviewing the situation and the delegation will have to take a call on when they're going to go for further negotiations. It's a bit too early for me to comment," she added.

Sitharaman's remarks came days after the US Supreme Court termed President Donald Trump's decision of imposition of sweeping taxes on imports illegal. The tariffs imposed on India were among the highest at 50%. It included a 25% punitive tariff for India's economic engagement with Russia.

In a trade deal announced earlier this month, the US agreed to lower the tariff to 18%. In return, the Trump administration has claimed that India has agreed to eliminate tariffs on a majority of American products and stop purchase of Russian oil.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra at a Central Board meeting of the RBI, at its headquarters, in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

Following the adverse Supreme Court ruling, Trump announced that the US will raise a temporary tariff from 10% to 15% on US imports from all countries, the maximum level allowed under the law.

The US Supreme Court's ruling has affected the progress on the India-US trade deal. The official-level talks to finalise the legal text of the deal has been delayed. Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce Darpan Jain, who is the chief negotiator from the Indian side, was scheduled to visit Washington this week. The visit has been postponed.

Addressing a press conference after the customary post-budget address to the Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Sitharaman said India has been on a very clear path of wanting to have trade deals and has already inked pacts with Australia, New Zealand, the UAE, Qatar, Oman, the EU and the UK. "So, therefore, our attempt to have a trade agreement will go on with countries," she said. Meanwhile, Sitharaman also flagged concern over mis-selling of products by banks.

"Banks should concentrate on their core business. My pet peeve has always been you're spending more time on selling insurance when it is not required," she said.

Earlier this month, the RBI issued draft guidelines on mis-selling, saying banks will have to refund the entire amount paid by the customer for purchase of the product or service and also compensate the customer for any loss arising due to mis-selling as per an approved policy.

The RBI has invited public feedback on the guidelines until March 4 and the stricter norms to curb mis-selling are scheduled to come into effect from July 1.

Amazon's 2nd-largest office in Asia opens in Bengaluru

Ecommerce giant to invest $35 bn more in India by 2030

BENGALURU, DHNS

Ecommerce giant Amazon on Monday officially opened its second-largest office in Asia in Bengaluru, which can house 7,000 employees across businesses.

Industries Minister MB Patil, who inaugurated Amazon's new corporate main office spread across 11 lakh square feet (1.1 million sq feet), a 12-storey campus, near Yelahanka, said large-scale campuses like Amazon's new campus create high-quality jobs, strengthen the local ecosystem, and support India's digital economy.

He also said that Karnataka has an annual per capita income of over Rs 3.80 lakh, ranking highest in the country. The state also stands second in annual GST contributions to the national exchequer, contributing Rs 1.6 lakh crore. "Bengaluru has climbed to the 21st position globally in the Global Innovation Index and is the only Indian city to feature among the top-30 in the Tech-Cities Index. Last year, the city recorded 14.6 million square feet of industrial leasing, the highest in the country," he said at the event.

Industries Minister MB Patil greets David Zapolsky, SVP, Chief Global Affairs and Legal Officer, Amazon, in Bengaluru on Monday.

Located on a five-acre site, the campus brings teams from technology, ecommerce, operations, payments, seller service and leadership functions. This is Amazon's 10th corporate office in the state. The ecommerce major established its presence in Bengaluru over 20 years ago, and the city continues to be a critical part of Amazon's India strategy.

Its Hyderabad office is the biggest in Asia. The company has already invested over $40 billion in India and has committed to invest an additional $35 billion in the country by 2030.

Speaking at the inauguration, David Zapolsky, Senior Vice-President, Chief Global Affairs and Legal Officer, Amazon, said the pace of innovation in India, the speed of technology adoption and the ambition around AI, is unmatched by any other country in the world.

"There's a growth orientation here that is unmistakable, bold, forward-looking and optimistic, and that energy is one of the reasons that India is such an important market for Amazon," he said, adding that they know Indian customers are digitally-savvy, local-first and quick to embrace new technologies. The level of AI experimentation and awareness here that I've seen across startups and enterprises is really remarkable. That constant push from customers, sellers, enterprises, and developers raises our bar, asking us to innovate faster. Talent here is extraordinary. Teams based in India are not only building for India, but they're building for customers around the world," he added.

Beyond corporate offices, Amazon operates seven fulfilment centres, three sort centres, over 130 last-mile delivery stations, and a network of micro-FCs for Amazon Now across Bengaluru. Additionally, over 80,000 sellers from Karnataka are already selling on Amazon India.

Samir Kumar, Country Manager, Amazon India, said, "India continues to be a long-term priority for Amazon, and Bengaluru has played a central role in our journey here."

Airtel subsidiary set for Rs 20,000 cr capitalisation

NEW DELHI, PTI: Bharti Airtel on Monday outlined major plans for its Non-Banking Financial Company, Airtel Money, and said the NBFC subsidiary will be capitalised with Rs 20,000 crore over the next few years.

Airtel will contribute 70% with the promoter group via Bharti Enterprises bringing in the balance 30%.

Airtel Money received its NBFC licence from RBI on February 13, 2026.

"Bharti Airtel today announced major plans for its NBFC, Airtel Money Limited, underscoring its commitment to narrow the credit gap in India," a release said. The NBFC subsidiary will be capitalised with Rs 20,000 crore to be injected over the next few years.

With strong digital assets, a large data and analytics engine powered by 500-plus data scientists, and deep operational expertise, Airtel said it aims to rapidly expand access to simple, secure, and innovative digital financial services across India.

Airtel has built a credit engine over the last two years, powered by its digital platform and deeply integrated channels, "resulting in one of India's strongest lending service provider (LSP) models".

The platform has already achieved hyperscale adoption with over Rs 9,000 crore in disbursements — supported by delinquency outcomes, driven by robust underwriting models, disciplined portfolio management, and real-time risk monitoring.

"The success of our LSP platform over the past two years is proof of our ability to combine technology, data, and customer trust to deliver impact at a national scale. We have built one of India's most-trusted and scalable digital credit engines-reaching millions with high-quality credit supported by industry's best performance metrics," Bharti Airtel Executive Vice-Chairman Gopal Vittal said.

The NBFC expansion strengthens this foundation and reflects the ambition to build a differentiated, future-ready digital lending business "one that stands for trust, innovation, and financial inclusion", he said.

GCCs to lead salary growth, with projected hikes of 10.4%

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) are set to lead salary growth in 2026, with projected increments of 10.4% (from 10.2% in 2025), followed by financial services at around 10%, and ecommerce at 9.9%. According to the EY Future of Pay report, India Inc is projected to have a 9.1% salary increase this year.

The report states that the country is expected to host about 2,100 GCCs by FY28, growing at 8% CAGR. GCC salary increments remain structurally elevated, supported by sustained global demand and skill scarcity, positioning GCCs as the strongest salary growth segment.

The sector has a revenue potential of about $100 billion by 2030. The report says that Bengaluru, Hyderabad and NCR continue to attract global investments as leading GCC hubs. Also, about 63% of GCCs hire for niche skills. Generative AI, ML engineering and advanced analytics attract the highest base pay premiums (30%-40%+), with technology and GCCs leading, followed by BFSI, according to the report.

As AI adoption accelerates across sectors, compensation models are being recalibrated to better reflect productivity, skill application, and measurable business impact. Between 50% and 60% of large organisations now use analytics in compensation planning, making data-driven decisions a core part of rewards strategy. At the same time, the use of AI across rewards and learning functions has tripled over the past 2-3 years, signalling a clear shift toward more intelligent and responsive people systems, the report adds.

"We are at a turning point in how organisations think about investing in their people. The future of pay in India is no longer defined by the size of the annual increment alone. It is increasingly about precision – deciding which skills to invest in, what outcomes to reward, and how to balance competitiveness with sustainability," Abhishek Sen, Partner and Leader, Total Rewards, HR Technology and Learning, People Consulting, EY India, said.

Reward strategies are becoming more deliberate, with sharper differentiation and better use of data. At the same time, employees are looking beyond the size of the increment; they want clarity, fairness, and consistency in how pay decisions are made, Sen added. As far as attrition is concerned, trends indicate a gradual normalisation in the workforce market, as overall attrition declined to 16.4% in 2025, from 17.5% in 2024.

IDFC First Bank's stock tumbles 20% after Rs 590-cr fraud

NEW DELHI, PTI: Shares of IDFC First Bank fell 20% on Monday after the private sector lender disclosed a Rs 590-crore fraud committed by its employees and others in accounts held by the Haryana government.

The stock nosedived 19.99% to Rs 66.85 — also its lower circuit limit — on the BSE.

The move came after the Haryana government de-empanelled AU Small Finance Bank, along with IDFC First Bank, from undertaking any government business over alleged fraudulent opening of accounts.

In addition, shares of AU Small Finance Bank plunged 7.62% to hit an intra-day low of Rs 950.50 apiece on the exchange.

IDFC First Bank on Sunday disclosed a Rs 590-crore fraud committed by its employees and others in accounts held by the Haryana government with the lender.

According to a circular issued by the finance department of the Haryana government, "IDFC First Bank and AU Small Finance Bank are hereby de-empanelled for government business in Haryana with immediate effect till further orders."

Sensex climbs 480 points on US court verdict

MUMBAI, PTI: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Monday, tracking gains in PSU bank, auto and financial stocks, as investor sentiment improved after the US Supreme Court struck down the Trump administration's sweeping tariffs.

Extending its winning streak for a second consecutive session, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 479.95 points, or 0.58%, to settle at 83,294.66. During the session, the benchmark jumped 671.44 points, or 0.81%, to hit an intraday high of 83,486.15.

A total of 2,435 stocks declined, while 1,894 advanced and 168 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"The US Supreme Court's ruling against Trump's reciprocal tariff policy was welcomed by domestic markets. Investors are awaiting more clarity on the US president's revised strategy and the scope of renegotiations by other nations," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

The 50-share NSE Nifty advanced 141.75 points, or 0.55%, to close at 25,713. In the intraday session, it appreciated 200.2 points, or 0.78%, to hit a high of 25,771.45.

Among the sectoral indices, PSU Bank increased the most by 1.4%, followed by Services (0.97%), Hospitals (0.89%), Healthcare (0.76%), Power (0.72%), Auto (0.71%), Financial Services (0.65%), FMCG (0.54%), and Utilities (0.52%).

LTM wins Europe medtech firm deal

BENGALURU, DHNS: IT services firm LTM on Monday announced a $100-million strategic agreement with a medtech company in Europe. The latter is a leading provider of innovative hearing solutions. LTM is to deliver product development and support across its flagship products.

The agreement will span over seven years. LTM will leverage iNXT, its cross-industry digital transformation and innovation platform designed to help enterprises manage the convergence of the physical and digital worlds, it said. Accordingly, LTM will develop and support the medtech company's primary hearing instrument brands and private labels.

Tier-2/3 cities account for 70% of formal jobs: Quess

BENGALURU, DHNS: Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities account for nearly 70% of formal jobs in the country, according to the findings of the Quess Pulse Report released on Monday.

Tier-3 cities alone account for the largest share of formal jobs, followed by fast-growing Tier-2 hubs across states such as Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Telangana.

A study of over 4.83 lakh workers across 640 locations shows that 70% of jobs are now in non-metro cities, with Tier-3 cities alone accounting for 40% of employment and Tier-2 hubs a further 29%, compared with 31% in Tier-1 cities. These opportunities are increasingly concentrated around fast-growing centres such as Coimbatore, Indore, Surat, Vadodara, Noida, and Lucknow, where expanding consumption and industrial corridors are reshaping local labour markets.

Retail, BFSI, EMPI/Manufacturing, Telecom, FMCG/FMCD, and Logistics together account for the vast majority of jobs and are also the primary engines of employment growth in Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets. These jobs are across roles such as store operations and sales to plant and supply-chain, reflecting the real face of India's growing formal workforce in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. The BFSI & Manufacturing sectors contribute over 45% of Quess' workforce from Tier-3 towns, while retail contributes 33%.

The Pulse Report finds that this shift beyond metros is powered by a distinctly young and short-tenure workforce. Across the 4.83 lakh workers studied, 64% are under the age of 30, mirroring India's broader demographic dividend.

More than half of the workforce (55%) has been in their current role for less than a year, reflecting high-mobility employment cycles driven by project-based staffing and seasonal demand.

The Cheesecake Factory Bakery enters India

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Cheesecake Factory Bakery, the global bakery division associated with The Cheesecake Factory, has entered India through a partnership with Bengaluru-based multi-brand firm The Gourmet Cafe.

The Gourmet Cafe plans to launch 55 outlets across India over the next 4-5 years, backed by an estimated investment of $60 million, with the business projected to generate Rs 200-250 crore in revenue within five years, as the brand scales nationally.

Following the Bengaluru launch, the company intends to strengthen its presence here with 3-6 additional outlets during 2026, before entering Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Ahmedabad.

BELLARY DAVANAGERE POWER TRANSMISSION LIMITED

(100% wholly owned subsidiary of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited)

B-9, QUTAB INSTITUTIONAL AREA, KATWARIA SARAI, NEW DELHI-110016

NOTICE

(UNDER SUB-SECTION (2) OF SECTION 15 OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT, 2003)

1. BELLARY DAVANAGERE POWER TRANSMISSION LIMITED, having its Registered Office at B-9, QUTAB INSTITUTIONAL AREA, KATWARIA SARAI, NEW DELHI-110016, which is incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013, has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, New Delhi under Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of the Electricity Act, 2003 for grant of Transmission Licence in respect of the transmission lines, sub-stations and other assets, the details of which are given below:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Line / Substation (location as per Note)	Line Length as per survey report of BPC/ Capacity	Transmission Charges (INR) Million per annum	Schedule COD	Remarks
1	Augmentation of transformation capacity by 2x1500 MVA, 765/400 kV ICTs (6th & 7th) at Davanagere PS	3000 MVA	1300	24 months from effective date i.e., 12.02.2028	-
2	4 Nos. of 220 kV line bays and 1 no. of 400 kV line bay at Davanagere PS	-			
3	Augmentation of Bellary PS by 400/220 kV, 6x500 MVA ICTs	3000 MVA			
4	Bellary – Davanagare 2nd 400 kV (Quad) D/C line	71.55 Km			
5	5 Nos. of 220 kV line bays at Bellary PS	-			

Note: (i) Locations for all elements are in the state of Karnataka

(ii) For complete scope please visit https://www.powergrid.in/subsidiaries

2. Complete application and other documents filed before the Commission are available on the website of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited https://www.powergrid.in/subsidiaries for access by any person. The application can also be inspected at the office of the Company at C/o ED (TBCB), Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, Saudamini, Plot No.2, Sector -29, Gurgaon 122001 with Sh. B Sridhar, Project Incharge, Bellary Davanagere Power Transmission Limited or Office of the Commission in accordance with the procedure specified by the Commission.

3. Objections or suggestions, if any, be filed before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 7th Floor, Tower B, World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi-110029, with a copy of the objection(s)/suggestion(s) to the applicant or its authorised agent, within 15 days of the publication of the notice in the newspaper.

Sh. B Sridhar
Project Incharge,
Bellary Davanagere Power Transmission Limited

Place: New Delhi
Date: 24.02.2026

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
U.R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL Old Airport Road, Bangalore - 560 017
(Phone: 080 25084156, 4184)
CORRIGENDUM - II

Sl.No	Description	Details
1	Name of work	Modification to Audio & Video Studio at Main Building, Main Campus, URSC – Civil Work including Acoustic & Lighting Design.
2	E-Tender Notice No.	URSC/C&MG/C/M/34/2025-26 dated: 16/01/2026
3	Estimated cost put to tender	₹ 13.28 Lakhs
4	Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	Extended upto 16.30 hrs on 04/03/2026
5	Last date and time for receipt of tenders	Up to 14.30 hrs. on 11/03/2026
6	Due date and time of opening of tenders	After 14.31 hrs on 11/03/2026

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details along with Hindi version in website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender documents from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.

Sd/-,
Group Director, C & MG, URSC

BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020

No.: BDA/EE-NPKL/work_TN-906/2025-26 Date: 23.02.2026

NOTICE INVITING SHORT-TERM TENDER
(Item Rate Tender under Two Cover System)
(Through GoK e-Procurement platform https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

On behalf of the Commissioner, BDA, Bengaluru, The Executive Engineer, NPKL Division, BDA, Bengaluru invites Item Rate Tenders in two tender document system from eligible Tenderers for the **work of Maintenance and Upgradation of Main and Approach Roads pavements in Banashankari 6th Stage of block 01 to block 11 of BDA Layout Areas under BDA limits.** Indent No. BDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT221. Approx cost put to tender: **Rs. 3180.48 lakhs.** EMD: **Rs. 31,81,000/-** (Rs. 1,00,000/- through e payment and Rs. 30,81,000/- through Bank Guarantee). Last date for receipt of Tenders: **11.03.2026 up to 17.00 Hrs.** For further details kindly log on to https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in or contact e-procurement helpline 080-25501216 / 25501217.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, NKPL Division, BDA, Bengaluru

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್‌ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ, ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ಸಂ: 21/2025–2026 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.02.2026

ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಐಟಂವಾರು ದರದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ KW-4ರ ರೀತಿ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ https:// kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪೂರ್ವಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಮಂಡ್ಯ, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 30.03.2026 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11–00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ 23.02.2026 ರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ಮೂಲಕ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.04.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 07.04.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ 08.04.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.31 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 09.04.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ. ಕಾಲಮಿತಿ: ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ 18 ತಿಂಗಳು, ಒಟ್ಟು 1 (ಒಂದು) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.7070.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ, ಕೆಲಸಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ., ಮೊತ್ತ ಮುಂತಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸದರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿ: 1) ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯ ಮುಂದೂಡುವಿಕೆ /ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ರದ್ದುಗೊಳಿಸುವ / ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿರಾಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. **2)** ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಬದಲಾಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾ.ಇಂ.,ಲೋ.ಇ.,ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

POLITICAL SCANDAL

UK police arrest ex-envoy Mandelson in Epstein case

Arrest deepens UK political crisis over Epstein-linked misconduct allegations

LONDON, AFP

The Metropolitan Police on Monday arrested former ambassador Peter Mandelson in a probe into allegations over his ties to disgraced US financier Jeffrey Epstein, only days after Prince Andrew was detained.

Mandelson, a pivotal figure in British politics and the UK's former envoy to Washington, was arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office following allegations arising from the latest set of documents linked to Epstein, released by the US government last month.

"Officers have arrested a 72-year-old man on suspicion of misconduct in public office," the Metropolitan Police said in a statement.

Images on UK television appeared to show Mandelson, 72, being driven away from his north London home accompanied by a man and a woman, after police raided his properties earlier this month.

"He was arrested at an address in Camden on Monday, 23 February and has been taken to a London police station for interview," the Met added.

The arrest comes days after

Former UK envoy Peter Mandelson. AP/PTI FILE

Prince Andrew, King Charles III's younger brother, was detained on Thursday and released under investigation in a separate misconduct in public office probe also related to the latest Epstein documents.

Mandelson is being probed over allegations that he sent sensitive documents to the late US sex offender while he was a government minister, including during the 2008 financial crash.

Police have not specified which documents are part of the probe.

The veteran ex-politician was sacked by Prime Minister Keir Starmer as envoy to Washington in September when an earlier release of documents linked to Epstein showed the extent of their friendship.

Mandelson's appointment had already unleashed a political storm, with two of Starmer's top aides resigning over the row.

Starmer apologised to Epstein's victims for appointing Mandelson and accused the ex-envoy of lying about the extent of his ties to the financier during the vetting process for his Washington posting.

Law firm Mishcon de Reya, representing Mandelson, said earlier this month that he "regrets, and will regret until his dying day, that he believed Epstein's lies about his criminality".

"Lord Mandelson did not discover the truth about Epstein until after his death in 2019," the statement said.

"He is profoundly sorry that powerless and vulnerable women and girls were not given the protection they deserved."

The government is set to release tens of thousands of emails, messages and documents on Mandelson's vetting procedure, which could ramp up pressure on the prime minister and other senior ministers.

Trump threatens nations over tariff 'games'

US Prez warning comes after SC ruling against key policy

WASHINGTON, AFP

President Donald Trump threatened nations on Monday with punishing hikes on import duties if they choose to "play games" after the US Supreme Court struck down his global tariffs last week.

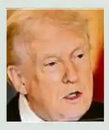
"Any country that wants to 'play games' with the ridiculous Supreme Court decision, especially those that have 'ripped off' the US for years, and even decades, will be met with a much higher tariff, and worse, than that which they just recently agreed to," Trump wrote on social media.

The high court's decision has dealt a sharp blow to Trump's economic agenda, of which tariffs — and his ability to impose them rapidly — have been a key feature.

For now, US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer has said that he expects partners to "stand by" the tariff deals they have struck with Washington. After the Supreme Court ruled against Trump's country-specific tariffs last week, saying he exceeded his authority in tapping emergency economic powers to impose them, the US leader turned to a separate law to announce new 15% duties on imports.

Trump insisted in a separate Truth Social post on Monday that "as President, I do not have to go back to Congress to get approval of tariffs." He also claimed that the court gave him "far more powers and strength" with its ruling, and that he could use "licenses to do absolutely 'terrible' things to foreign countries."

DONALD TRUMP
US President



"Any country that wants to 'play games' with the ridiculous Supreme Court decision, especially those that have 'ripped Off' the USA for years, and even decades, will be met with a much higher tariff, and worse, than that which they just recently agreed to.

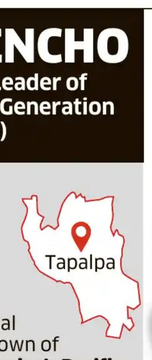
'Illegal tariffs' to end from today

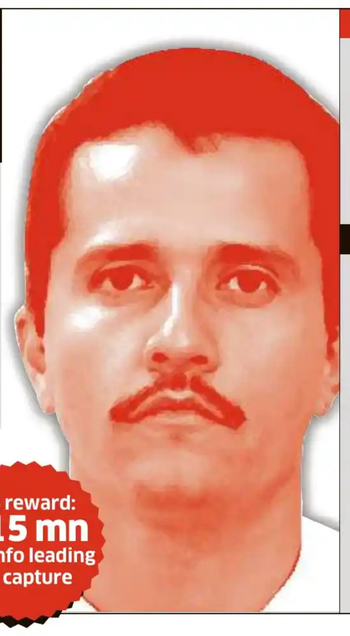
WASHINGTON, REUTERS: The US Customs and Border Protection agency said it will halt collections of tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act at 12:01 am EST (10:31 am IST) on Tuesday, more than three days after the US Supreme Court declared the duties illegal.

The agency said told shippers that it will deactivate all tariff codes associated with Trump's prior IEEPA-related orders as of Tuesday. The IEEPA decision coincides with Trump's imposition of a new, 15% global tariff under a different legal authority to replace the ones struck down by the Supreme Court on Friday

EL MENCHO
He was the Leader of Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG)

Oseguera, 60, died in custody after being injured in a military operation by Mexican special forces in the town of **Tapalpa on Mexico's Pacific coast in Jalisco state**





Name: Nemesio O Cervantes (El Mencho)
Age: 59
Nationality: Mexican
Death: 22 Feb 2026

US reward: $15 mn for info leading to capture

RISE TO POWER
- Migrated to the US in 1980s.
- Deported after a drug-related conviction.
- Joined the Milénio Cartel in Mexico.
- Founded CJNG in 2010.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES
CJNG is considered one of Mexico's most violent criminal groups.
- Trafficked methamphetamine, fentanyl, heroin, and cocaine.
- International distribution networks across North America, Europe, and Asia
- Also involved in illegal arms trade, extortion and assassinations. His photo is available on DCX, and there are some Mexico violence photos as well

Violence erupts after killing of Mexican cartel boss El Mencho

25 troops killed in action during operation

GUADALAJARA, AP/PTI

Mexico Security Secretary Omar Garcia Harfuch said Monday that 25 members of the National Guard were killed in Jalisco in six separate attacks following the killing of Jalisco New Generation Cartel leader Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes.

Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho", led one of the fastest-growing criminal networks in Mexico, notorious for trafficking fentanyl, methamphetamine and cocaine to the US and staging brazen attacks against government officials who challenged it.

He was killed during a shootout in his home state of Jalisco as the Mexican military attempted to capture him. Cartel members responded with violence across the country, blocking roads and setting fire to vehicles.

Also killed were a prison guard, an agent from the state prosecutor's office and a woman whom Garcia Harfuch did not identify. He also said some 30 criminal suspects were killed in Jalisco, and four others were killed in Michoacan.

Several Mexican states cancelled school on Monday, with local and foreign governments warning their citizens to stay indoors after widespread violence erupted.

President Claudia Sheinbaum urged calm on Monday, and authorities said all of the more than 250 cartel roadblocks across 20 states had been cleared.

The president was expected to address the situation at her daily news briefing on Monday morning.

The White House confirmed that the US provided intelligence support for the operation to capture the cartel leader and applauded Mexico's army for taking down a man who was one of the most wanted criminals in both countries.

US pulling out non-essential embassy staff from Beirut

WASHINGTON, REUTERS: The State Department is pulling out non-essential personnel and their eligible family members from the US embassy in Beirut, a senior State Department official said on Monday, amid growing concerns about the risk of a military conflict with Iran.

"We continuously assess the security environment, and based on our latest review, we determined it prudent to reduce our footprint to essential personnel," said a senior State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The embassy remains operational with core staff in place. This is a temporary measure intended to ensure the safety of our personnel while maintaining our ability to operate and assist US citizens," the official said.

A source at the US embassy said 50 people had been evacuated, while an official at Beirut airport said 32 embassy staff, along with family members, had flown out of Beirut airport on Monday.

The US has built up one of its biggest military deployments in the Middle East, with President Donald Trump warning on Thursday that "really bad things will happen" if no deal is reached to resolve a long-standing dispute over Tehran's nuclear programme. Iran has threatened to strike US bases in the region if it is attacked.

Armed group in Nigeria kills 38 people

ABUJA (NIGERIA), AP/PTI: Police in Nigeria say 38 people were killed and others were abducted in an attack last week in northwestern Zamfara state.

Authorities received intelligence before the attack on Thursday, but a lack of road access prevented police from reaching the area in time, police said in a statement.

70 militants killed in Pakistan strikes

KABUL, AP/PTI: Pakistan's military killed at least 70 militants in strikes along the border with Afghanistan early Sunday, targeting what it described as hideouts of Pakistani militants it blamed for recent attacks inside the country, the deputy interior minister said. Kabul rejected the claim.

Talal Chaudhry, Pakistan's deputy interior minister, offered no evidence for his claim in an interview with Geo News that at least 70 militants were killed in the strikes. Pakistan's state-run media later reported that militant fatalities jumped to 80.

The Afghan Defense Ministry said in a statement that "various civilian areas" in the provinces of Nangarhar and Paktika in eastern Afghanistan were hit, including a religious madrassa and multiple homes.

The statement called the strikes a violation of Afghanistan's airspace and sovereignty.

Afghan government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said on X the attacks "killed and wounded dozens, including women and children." He said Pakistan's claim of killing 70 militants was "inaccurate."

Mawlawi Fazl Rahman Fayyaz, the provincial director of the Afghan Red Crescent Society in Nangarhar province, said 18 people were killed and several others wounded.

Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari said Islamabad's recent strikes along the Afghan border were "rooted in (Pakistan's) inherent right to defend its people against terrorism."

30 feared dead after migrant boat capsizes off Crete

ATHENS(GREECE), AP/PTI: About 30 people are feared dead after a boat carrying migrants capsised off the Greek island of Crete, Greek authorities and the United Nations' International Organization for Migration (IOM) said Monday.

The boat, carrying about 50 migrants, capsised 20 nautical miles off the port of Kali Limenes, the southernmost point on Crete, on Saturday. Three men were found dead that day and a woman's body was found floating at sea on Sunday.

No other survivors or victims have been found since. Passing ships are continuing to search the waters, a coast guard spokesperson told The Associated Press on Monday.

Boong scripts history as first Indian film to bag BAFTA

LONDON, PTI

Manipuri coming-of-age comedy-drama *Boong*, produced by Farhan Akhtar's Excel Entertainment, won the prestigious BAFTA Award for Best Children's & Family Film in London on Sunday.

The film's debutant director, Lakshmipriya Devi, made an emotional plea for peace in her acceptance speech after receiving the coveted trophy from Paddington Bear, the lead character starring in the West End show *Paddington The Musical*. "The walk up till here felt like the last few steps to reach a summit of a mountain we never knew we were climbing in the first place," said Devi.

"Just want to use this opportunity to say that we pray for peace to return to Manipur, we pray that all the internally displaced children, including the child actors in the film, regain their joy, their innocence, and their dreams once again.

"We pray that no conflict is ever formidable enough to destroy the one superpower that all of us have as human beings, that is, forgiveness. So, thank you BAFTA for giving us not only an award but also this stage to express our hope," she said. The Manipuri film, starring Gugun Kipgen and Bala Hijam, revolves around a young boy in search of his absent father, whom he wants to bring to surprise his mother. It was the only Indian film nominated at the awards.

It beat international competition from other nominees, *Lilo and Stitch*, *Arco* and *Zootropolis 2*.

A still from the film Boong.

BIG WINNERS
- Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another" dominated the BAFTA Awards with six wins, including Best Film, Director, and Adapted Screenplay. Robert Aramayo scored a double win with Leading Actor and the EE Rising Star Award.

Venezuela minister demands 'immediate release' of Maduro

GENEVA, AFP: Venezuela's Foreign Minister Yvan Gil Pinto on Monday demanded the immediate release of Nicolas Maduro, who was ousted as president in a January 3 raid by the United States.

Maduro, who autocratically ruled Venezuela between March 2013 and his capture by US forces, is in custody in New York along with his wife, awaiting trial.

Maduro, 63, has pleaded not guilty to drug trafficking charges and declared that he was a "prisoner of war".

Addressing the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Gil demanded "the immediate release by the government of the United States of America of the constitutional president of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro Moros, and his wife, the first lady Cilia Flores".

"January 3, 2026, marked a turning point of extreme gravity," Gil told the top UN rights body. "An illegal military action against our country resulted in the deaths of more than 100 people, and the arbitrary detention" of Maduro and his wife, Gil said.

"Despite this action, carried out in a context of profound technological and military asymmetry between our country and the nuclear power of the United States ... we have chosen to open a diplomatic channel to resolve our differences with that country," he said.

"Not through submission, but in the sovereign equality of states. Not through fear, but with the conviction that dialogue is the only civilised path between nations."

Gil said Venezuela was insisting on the need for "international cooperation based on the legal equality of states".

WORLD AT A GLANCE

The Naked Cowboy performs in Times Square during a winter storm in Manhattan, New York City, on Monday. The city is in shutdown mode over a massive snowstorm hitting the United States northeast. AFP

United Nations chief decries global rise of 'rule of force'

▸ The United Nations leader warned Monday that "the rule of force" was spreading, as the powerful trample on international law and wield artificial intelligence and other technologies to attack human rights, AFP reports from Geneva.

"Human rights are under a full-scale attack around the world," Antonio Guterres told the opening of the UN Human Rights Council's annual session in Geneva. "The rule of law is being outmuscled by the rule of force." The UN secretary-general stressed that "this assault is not coming from the shadows, or by surprise. It is happening in plain sight -- and often led by those who hold the greatest power". He did not mention specific situations, although he did voice outrage at Russia's war in Ukraine, where he said more than 15,000 civilians had been killed in four years of violence. "It is more than past time to end the bloodshed," he said. Guterres also highlighted the "blatant violations of human rights, human dignity and international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory".

Canadian PM to visit India

▸ Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney is scheduled to travel to India on February 26, with the aim of "expanding" ties with India and building new partnerships in defence, energy and AI, PTI reports from Ottawa.

Carney will first visit Mumbai, then New Delhi, India, where he will meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a press release issued by the office of the Prime Minister of Canada said. "The leaders will focus on elevating and expanding the Canada-India relationship, with ambitious new partnerships in trade, energy, technology and artificial intelligence (AI), talent and culture, and defence," it said. Carney will meet with business leaders to identify investment opportunities in Canada and create new partnerships between businesses in both nations, it added. In 2024, India was Canada's seventh-largest goods and services trading partner, with two-way trade coming to USD 30.8 billion.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (front C) after being elected as the General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea in Pyongyang on Sunday. AFP

Six planets to parade in line

▸ Six planets are linking up in the sky at the end of February, and most will be visible to the naked eye, AP/PTI reports from New York.

It's what's known as a planetary parade, which happens when multiple planets appear to line up in the sky at once. The planets aren't in a straight line, but are close together on one side of the sun. Skygazers can usually spot two or three planets after sunset, according to NASA. Hangouts of four or five that can be glimpsed with the naked eye are less common and occur every few years. Last year featured lineups of six and all seven planets. On Saturday, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter and Saturn will be visible to the naked eye if clear skies allow.

Trump skyscraper in Australia

▸ The Trump Organization revealed plans Monday for a US$1.1 billion, 91-storey Trump hotel and apartment tower in eastern Australia's Gold Coast tourism hotspot, AFP reports from Sydney.

Located in Queensland's beachside suburb of Surfers Paradise, it would be the first Trump-branded hotel in Australia. "Set to become Australia's tallest tower, this landmark address redefines beachfront sophistication with world-class amenities, iconic design, and uninterrupted Gold Coast views," Trump Hotels said. Altus Property Group signed the deal with US President Donald Trump's family enterprise on February 14.

A protester holds a cardboard cutouts of former Philippines' president Rodrigo Duterte during a protest in his support outside the International Criminal Court in The Hague on Monday. AFP

The need to plant seeds of goodness in children

ALVINA CLARA

In the digital era, children have easy access to screens and frequently encounter content that can be harmful — such as violence, foul language, and mockery. Short-form videos, such as reels and clips, have become a prominent trend. While some content may appear entertaining on the surface, it can subtly shape a child's psyche. Although many children can discern right from wrong, a significant number can be swayed by the media and may imitate what they see.

As AI takes over, we cannot eliminate screens from our lives. However, children need guidance on using gadgets and technology responsibly. From conducting research to accessing valuable information, these tools can be harnessed for good. As Instagram reels and entertaining TikTok videos fuel an intense race for likes, followers, and easy income, the real challenge for parents, educators, and communities is how to nurture and instil enduring moral values in children from a young age. Since adolescence often brings rebellion, starting moral education early is key. Here are simple tips to nurture values in

young minds so they glow brighter than screens.

■ **Lead by example:** Learning doesn't happen only in classrooms. Today, children learn by watching and listening to the adults they grow up with. Adults who model empathy and kindness in everyday life — listening patiently, apologising sincerely, sharing credit, supporting others — set a living example of these virtues. The simplest acts — holding a door, offering help, admitting a mistake or acknowledging others' contributions — become lasting lessons in their growing-up years. Early moral education isn't about preaching; it's about practising too, to shape children's thinking. Pausing before acting, considering others' needs, and acting with integrity—even when no one is watching — helps children emulate good behaviour.

Some children mirror their parents' actions, especially in homes where adults may struggle with narcissistic or borderline tendencies and use their kids to meet their own needs. In environments of violence and abuse, teachers play a crucial role in understanding what underlies troubling behaviour and helping children grow toward better values.

■ **Build a vocabulary of virtues:** Encourage children to read moral science books and record valuable lessons in a diary. Invite them to reflect on meanings and continuously identify practical ways to embody the values. Early conversations about kindness, honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage provide children with a vocabulary for moral reflection. Instead of "Do this because I said so," we can say, "Let's consider how our actions affect others. What would be fair in this situation?" Regular, age-appropriate conversations help enforce ethics and integrity.

■ **Turn daily life into moral practice:** We can use daily life to teach children essential values. Model table manners, encourage sharing, gratitude, and mindful consumption. Teach them to play fair, take turns, and resolve disagreements amicably. Involve them in simple acts of service — volunteering with a religious organisation, donating toys, participating in neighbourhood clean-ups, and helping a neighbour. Encourage reading about moral virtues and explore their path to spirituality and higher realms of being.

■ **Create safe spaces for disclosure:** Children flourish in environments where they feel supported and understood. Seek to understand before offering advice. Probe with questions: What happened? What triggered the reaction? Who was affected? How can harm be repaired, and what steps can prevent repetition? This approach teaches accountability without shaming. Show that you care and discipline with empathy. When missteps occur, address the behaviour rather than rebuking the child. Help children review the situation from a broader perspective and steer them toward better choices in the future.

■ **Embrace cultural diversity, honour preferences:** Moral education isn't one-size-fits-all. It should honour family values and culture while allowing them to formulate and prioritise their own value systems. Some children develop unique ways of thinking; as adults, we should support them in forging their path rather than attempting to control it as per familial expectations. Exposing children to diverse perspectives and ways of life will help them cultivate the virtues of acceptance and tolerance.

One wrong act doesn't define a person. Sometimes, deeper issues such as immaturity, neglect, or gaps in parenting influence decisions. Think of character as a garden that develops over time. Plant seeds of virtue early and water them consistently, and children can grow in the right direction. If they wander off track, address the harm and prune what's harmful without uprooting the whole plant. Make nurturing values a regular habit in early childhood, so the results show up gradually in their choices and everyday actions.

(The author is a counsellor)

Preparing for a new brave world

Outdated methods of teaching and evaluation must change to equip the new-age tech-savvy students with critical thinking, writes Bhanu Prakash R

The higher education system in India is at a crossroads. On the one hand are students who have already transcended chalk-and-talk classrooms, inflexible curricula, and linear career paths. Institutions that remain attached to past structures, obsolete assumptions, and gradually evolving reforms are found on the other side. It is no longer a mere form of detachment. It manifests in disengaged classrooms, declining employability, student restlessness, and the further undermining of belief in the value of formal degrees.

Students no longer wait until institutions change. They change themselves without guidance by studying online, being part of digital communities, engaging with world content, internalising, and experimenting. They place more emphasis on relevance and less on ritual, on the application of theory and on outcomes rather than on mere credentials.

However, in most institutions of higher learning, the learner mindset has not changed in decades. This is an academic issue as well as a systemic risk. Learning models are created to learn from the past, not the future.

The most conspicuous cracks in the system are in curriculum design. Even as the world of work is being transformed by artificial intelligence, automation, sustainability demands, and interdisciplinary functions, many higher education programs remain anchored to stagnant syllabi that can barely keep up with even the slightest changes in the world.

Systems that test memory, not ability

Where they are updated, curriculum updates have been mostly compliance-oriented rather than vision-oriented. They are usually gradual, sluggish, and detached from the complexities of the world. In affiliated college systems, the form of institutionally bounded innovation cannot exist due to rigidity and a follow-the-leader mentality, and even autonomous colleges tend to follow conventional patterns due to a lack of custom to break, fear of breaking, or a loathing of change. Private universities are managing the progression, but only a few are able to crack the code on certain regions. This is also leading to an imbalance in demand and supply across institutions in one particular region.

This is a gap that learners can see. They relate classroom material to industry demands and soon identify the discrepancy. Consequently, formal education is just a component of the learning experience, often the least effective, and not the sole one. The degree, once at the core of skill acquisition and professional readiness, is becoming increasingly a mere formality, not a foundation.

The method of learning evaluation is also incompatible. The examination system in most higher learning institutions in India remains focused on recall, speed and conformity. Marks are still considered a measure of intelligence, whereas critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, resilience, and problem-solving are not measured extensively.

To future generations of learners, used to feedback loops, experiential learning, and constant assessment, this method is regressive and depressing. It punishes the quest to know, discourages experimentation, and fosters the notion that success lies in copying anticipated responses rather than in creating new insights.

Assessment systems need to change fundamentally in order to restore some credibility to degrees. The continual assessment, project-based learning, portfolios, live industry problems, simulations, peer learning, and reflective assessment should not be peripheral elements in academic practice but rather centrepieces.

An obsolete learning environment

Though institutions continue to struggle with what today's learners require, the education pipeline is now disrupted by an even more disruptive generation of learners. These future students will be brought up in a world of AI-based tools, immersive technologies and hyper-personalised content. They will have adaptive, experiential, visual and goal-oriented expectations of learning.

The unpleasant fact is that the Indian higher education ecosystem is not organizationally or culturally ready for such a change. There is a lag in faculty development, pedagogy, models of governance, infrastructure, and the institution's mindsets. Unless change is proactively implemented, the disconnect between learners' expectations and what institutions offer will only continue to widen, not only to irrelevance but also to institutional sustainability.

Perhaps the most disturbing indicator is the decline in belief in degrees as a path to a satisfying career. Employers are becoming more concerned with skills, adaptability and mentality, rather than formal qualifications. This is something learners feel early, which is why most people perceive degrees as a transaction rather than a transformation.

It is not just an employability problem; it is a legitimacy crisis. Higher education was not supposed to be a credentialing factory. It was seen as a place where intellectual growth, ethical leadership, and contributions to society could be developed. Degrees that do not add value to the present and even the future are rendered irrelevant and untrustworthy. This is partly why we witness the failure of Engineering and MBA hype.

Collective work and bravery

One of the most frequent institutional reflexes is to wait until the government or regulatory bodies issue orders, or regulatory changes, or interventions at the top. Although policy frameworks play a significant role, the rapid change in learner behaviour and the global workplace today makes passive waiting hazardous.

Institutional leadership and collective action are the real opportunities. Institutions of higher learning, whether affiliated, autonomous, private, or public, need to go beyond silos and start cooperating in meaningful ways. Common curriculum models, credit unions, faculty transfers, industry joint ventures, and cross-institutional innovation clusters can drive change more rapidly without exceeding regulatory limits.

Teamwork also allows the sharing of risks. When institutions learn together, fail together and develop together, experimentation becomes less disheartening.

Institutional courage is the need of the hour. Bravery to reform the curriculum to focus on skills required tomorrow instead of the outmoded disciplinary ghettos. Bravery to think of evaluation in new ways beyond grades and positions. Bravery to enable faculty to be more of learning designers and less content transmitters. And the boldness to act as equal partners in learning with learners, rather than passive recipients.

The existing bottleneck is also an opportunity. Institutions that are decisive, bold, collaborative, and learner-centric will not just survive but also contribute to the future of higher education.

The role of the higher education system in India has long been a transformational factor in the nation-building. To keep doing it, it has to realign itself with the realities of future learners and the uncertainty of the fast-changing world. The students have already passed on. Whether the institutions are prepared to stay up to date, or even to be ahead.

(The author is an educationalist)

BULLETIN BOARD

Language expert (Malayalam)
ARLaang Technologies is hiring a Malayalam language expert intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of spoken and written Malayalam proficiency, transcription and translation skills, and spoken and written English proficiency can apply by March 20. The stipend is Rs 9,000-15,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/V0xgf.

Digital marketing internship
Cannibals Media Pvt. Ltd. is hiring a digital marketing intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of Digital Marketing, English Proficiency (Spoken), English Proficiency (Written), and Social Media Marketing can apply by March 20. The stipend is Rs 4,000 /month. Apply at:https://shorturl.at/L3Qmr.

AI/full-stack tech internship
Ampys Consulting Private Limited is hiring an AI/full-stack tech intern in Bengaluru. Students with knowledge of .NET, Angular, C#, Microsoft Azure, MS SQL Server, OpenAI API, Python, and REST API can apply by March 20. The stipend is Rs 5,000-10,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/nCeVz.

Accounting/ taxation internship
The Startup Zone is hiring an accounting and taxation intern in Bengaluru. Students with knowledge of MS Office and MS Excel can apply by March 21. The stipend is Rs 5,000 - 7000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/EzqGp.

How to humanise technology for employee betterment

SAIKIRAN MURLI

For years, workplace technology has been obsessed with efficiency. Faster processes. Cleaner dashboards. Automated everything. But somewhere along the way, the "human" in Human Resources got pushed to the margins. We built systems that could measure almost everything except how people actually feel.

Humanising technology isn't the opposite of productivity; it's the evolution of it. When people feel supported, understood, and connected, organisations don't just run better... they become better. Humanised tech simply creates the conditions for that to happen.

Design for feelings, not features

Most systems are built around tasks and workflows. But people don't experience work as tasks; they experience it as emotions. Pressure, excitement, uncertainty, pride, burnout, and belonging.

Humanised technology recognises such emotional states and allows space for them.

It asks questions, such as:

■ How does this exchange make an employee feel?

■ Does the system overwhelm or reassure?

■ Does it help someone feel seen or just monitored?

Instead of adding more features, it adds more understanding. Instead of forcing people to adapt to the system, it allows the system to adapt to people.

Every workplace has invisible friction: that 15-minute hunt for a file, the repeated logins, the unclear approvals, and the cryptic error messages. Individually, they seem small; collectively, they drain focus, confidence, and time.

Humanising technology starts with removing these micro-frictions. When things "just work," employees feel lighter. They trust the system. They get back time, one of the most meaningful wellbeing benefits a company can offer.

Being productive shouldn't be a chore.

Put autonomy at the centre

People don't want more control; they want enough control. They want to navigate their work life like attendance, shifts, leaves, goals, and conversations, without fear of judgment or unnecessary gatekeeping.

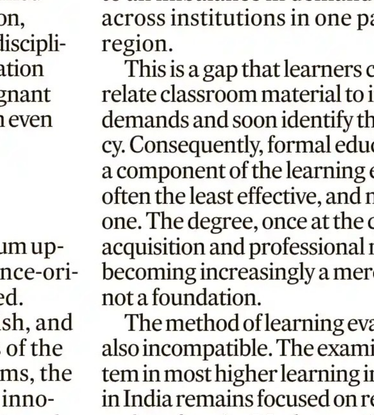
Humanising technology means giving people autonomy without making them feel alone. It respects people's time and dignity by saying: "We trust you to manage your work life, and we're here if you need help."

The greatest of these facilitators is, arguably, autonomy supported by clarity.

Amplify the human

AI is powerful, but people don't want a robot culture. They want technology that enhances the human relationships that already matter with their managers, teams, and the organisation.

Humanised AI automates repetitive tasks so managers can spend more time on conversations that truly matter. It surfaces insights that foster empathy rather than surveillance, helping leaders understand people



rather than merely monitor them. At the same time, it offers gentle nudges towards healthier work routines, supporting balance without introducing additional layers of control.

The goal is not to remove people from the process. It's to remove the parts of work that stop people from being fully human.

Inclusion as a design principle: Humanising technology means building for everyone, not just the digitally confident. This means accessible interfaces, language people understand, options for every type of worker, including frontline, deskless, remote, and hybrid roles, design centred on the inclusion of differences in ability, context, and comfort, and a mobile-first approach. When people feel included in the system, they feel included in the organisation.

Bring transparency

Nothing inspires trust like clarity. People need to understand what information is collected, why it is collected, how it is used, and how it benefits them. When technology is honest, employees feel safe, and safety is a precursor to every form of wellbeing, mental, emotional, and professional. It transforms technology into a co op, not a black box.

Tech as a wellbeing ecosystem

Humanising technology isn't about adding a "wellbeing feature". It's about designing a workplace ecosystem where technology plays a subtle but powerful role in helping employees feel balanced, valued, and supported. Think of technology as a gentle prod to step back, a simple space asking for help, an easy way to share concerns, a transparent way to track progress, and a constant reminder that the organisation cares.

This is where humanisation truly happens, when technology becomes a part of your support system, not your stress cycle. It's not a project, in the end, to humanise technology. It's a promise. A promise of a workplace no longer around systems but built around people. A promise that productivity and empathy can coexist. A promise that technology will not replace human contact, but deepen it.

At its root, human-centred technology does one thing beautifully: It gives people the freedom to work like humans again.

(The author is the founder of an HR tech platform)

Do you have topics that matter to students and educational institutions? Are you an expert in the field? Do you head an organsation and have insights to share? Write to us: dheducation@deccanherald.co.in

Gender no bar to math ability: Study

A statewide baseline assessment conducted by Bengaluru-based Prayoga Institute of Education Research has found that gender does not determine mathematical proficiency among middle school students, challenging long-standing assumptions about boys and girls in mathematics classrooms.

The Mathematics Prerequisite Baseline Assessment, carried out during the 2024–25 academic year, evaluated 2,023 Class 6 students from government and rural schools across 35 educational districts in Karnataka. The study focused on foundational competencies required for grade-level mathematics and assessed performance across five domains: numeracy, fractions, pattern recognition, time and simplification.

On a 25-mark scale, the average score difference between girls and boys was just 0.55 marks — a 4.3 per cent variation — in favour of girls. Girls outperformed boys across all five domains, though the differences were modest.

In numeracy, girls averaged 3.42 compared to boys' 3.24. In simplification, girls scored 3.64 against 3.45. Differences in fractions and time-related concepts were minimal, indicating near-identical levels of understanding. Overall, the findings underscore that mathematical ability is not inherently shaped by gender.

"Our findings clearly show that mathematics ability is not shaped by gender, but by learning opportunities and classroom practices," said Dr Karuna Simha, Senior Researcher at Prayoga, who led the study. "When given the same conditions, girls perform on par with, and often slightly better than, boys."

While gender gaps were negligible, district-level variations were striking. Average scores ranged from 9.31 in Mandya to 20.09 in Mysuru — a difference of over 10 marks on a 25-mark assessment.

Districts such as Mysuru, Kumta–Uttara Kannada and Chikkamagaluru recorded some of the highest averages, each exceeding 18 marks. Students in these regions demonstrated stronger foundational mastery across multiple domains. In contrast, Mandya and Bengaluru South reported lower averages, with students showing particular difficulty in time, pattern recognition and fractions. Several other districts, including Bangalore Rural, Ramanagara, Chikkaballapura, Dakshina Kannada, Shivamogga, Tumakuru, Hassan and Udupi, fell within a mid-range performance band.

The sharp variation across districts suggests that local learning environments, instructional quality and classroom practices play a far greater role in shaping outcomes than gender.

Prayoga, a Bengaluru-based education research institute working to strengthen science and mathematics learning through evidence-based interventions, said the findings call for a shift in focus. Rather than attributing performance differences to gender, policymakers and educators must prioritise systemic improvements in pedagogy, teacher preparation and equitable classroom conditions.

The data, researchers say, offers clear evidence: when learning opportunities are equal, mathematical potential is too.

-DHNS

Karnataka fall short in quarters

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka made a quarterfinal exit following an 18-run defeat against Railways in the Senior Women's One Day Trophy in Mohali on Monday.

A century by Shipra Giri (126) took Railways to a total of 251/6 in 50 overs and proved too steep for Karnataka despite a half-century by Shishira Gowda (55) and a fighting effort by Niki Prasad (46) as the side reached 233/9 in 50 overs.

Brief scores: Railways: 251/6 in 50 overs (Nuzhat Parween 29, Shipra Giri 126, Arushi Goel 43 n.o.) bt Karnataka: 233/9 in 50 overs (Shubha Satheesh 43, Shishira Gowda 55, Mithila Vinod 31, Niki Prasad 46, Simran Dil Bahadur 2-32, SP Aich 3-48). **Result:** Railways won by 18 runs.

Bindra's IOC tenure ends

NEW DELHI, PTI: Indian shooting legend Abhinav Bindra on Monday announced the end of his eight-year tenure as vice chair of the International Olympic Committee's athletes commission, describing his stint as one of the most meaningful chapters of his sporting journey.

The 43-year-old Bindra, who became India's first individual Olympic gold-medallist in the 2008 Beijing Games, has been replaced by Kenyan rugby player Humphrey Kayange in the panel that was rejigged at the ongoing Winter Olympics in Italy.

Bindra said each one of his colleagues tried to strengthen athlete representation and ensure that their voice is heard and respected.

Jet Sukhoi wins feature

DELHI RESULTS

Imdad Ali Khan-trained Jet Sukhoi, ridden by Vishal Shivhare, won the Indian Air Force Cup, the feature event of the races on Monday.

1. Silver Fortress Plate - 1100M: Royal Baby (Ankit Pal) 1; Miss Boost (Angad) 2; Sir Mor (Dhanu Deora) 3; Striking Distance (RN Manjhi) 4; Wb: 1/2, Shd, 4-1/4L. T: 1:08.28. TB: Mohsin Khan. Fav: Ustaad Ji.

2. Adler Star Plate - 1200M: Divit (Jai Parkash) 1; Trending Cruise (Dhanu Deora) 2; Missey Boy (Shekhawat) 3; Thanks Again (Varun) 4; NR: Ashwa Sardar/ Wb: 1-1/4, 3-3/4, 3/4L. T: 1:13.21. TB: Zulfiqar Khan. Fav: Missey Boy.

3. Rapid Action Plate (Div I) - 1200M: Hukamori (Jai Parkash) 1; Ashwa Kohima (Vishal) 2; Big Decision (Vishal Shivhare) 3; Tomorrows Dreams (Angad) 4; Wb: 1/2, 2-1/4, 1-1/2L. T: 1:12.76. TB: Ajay Sharma. Fav: Ashwa Kohima.

4. Rapid Action Plate (Div II) - 1200M: Ashwa Simran (Vishal Shivhare) 1; Robust (Rakesh) 2; Eyes On The Prize (Akash Rajput) 3; Ashwa Kangto (Shekhawat) 4; Wb: Nk, 8-1/4, 4-1/4L. T: 1:11.90. TB: S Nawab. Fav: Robust.

5. Indian Air Force Cup - 1100M: Jet Sukhoi (Vishal Shivhare) 1; Big Daddy (Vishal) 2; Emperor Ashoka (Akash Rajput) 3; Ashwa Frankie (S Quresi) 4; Wb: 3/4, 2-1/2, 1-1/2L. T: 1:06.66. TB: Imdad Ali Khan. Fav: Big Daddy.

6. Entertainment Plate - 1000M: Master Bomber (Angad) 1; Kaftan (Ankit Pal) 2; Alex (Varun) 3; Poly Czar (K.Paswan) 4; Wb: 1-1/4:, 2, 1-1/4L. T: 1:01.02. TB: S.M.Abbas. Fav: Super Speed.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 24w; 18, 12p; Fc: Rs 75; Q: Rs 29; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 50; Tri: Rs 207 & 115; 3 Ex: Rs 375 & 161.
II race: Rs 41w; 16, 14p; Fc: Rs 142; Q: Rs 54; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 35; Tri: Rs 190 & 75; Ex: Rs 369 & 549.
III race: Rs 42w; 17, 14p; Fc: Rs 146; Q: Rs 60; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 34; Tri: Rs 591 & 310; Ex: Rs 753 & 249.
IV race: Rs 25w; 15, 13p; Fc: Rs 50; Q: Rs 19; Shp: Rs 32; Thp: Rs; 35; Tri: Rs 84 & 34; Ex: Rs 842 & 388.
V race: Rs 20w; 10, 13, 14p; Fc: Rs 46; Q: Rs 20; Shp: Rs 33; Thp: Rs 36; Tri: Rs 97 & 51; Ex: Rs 199 & 149.
VI race: Rs 54w; 14, 11, 25p; Fc: Rs 498; Q: Rs 140; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 52; Tri: Rs 1,376 & 1,130; Ex: Rs 7,511 & 2,682.
Jackpot: Rs 58,593 (3). **Runner-up:** Rs 1,395 (54). **Treble:** Rs 1,542 (50).

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

T20 WC: England vs Pakistan (7 pm). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

1st WODI: Australia vs India (9:20 am). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

Ranji Trophy Final: Karnataka vs Jammu & Kashmir (day 1, 9:30 am). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

Champions League (play-offs Leg-2): Atletico Madrid vs Club Brugge (11:15 pm), Bayer Leverkusen vs Olympiacos, Internazionale vs Bodo/Glimt, Newcastle United vs FK Qarabag (all 1:30 am, Wednesday). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

ISL: Odisha FC vs Inter Kashi FC (7:30 pm). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 2, FanCode.**

HOCKEY

Pro League: Spain vs India (2 pm). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

CRICKET RANJI TROPHY FINAL

A battle of might versus grit awaits

Full-strength Karnataka eye ninth title against J&K

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Cricket's appeal often lies in its glorious uncertainty. Karnataka had no control over the fading natural light, and if it had gone 15 minutes earlier in Mohali, their season would have ended. They were chasing an unlikely 250 in 40 overs to qualify, and an earlier halt would have drawn the curtains on their campaign.

Instead, they now feature in a game every domestic cricketer dreams of playing and every team aspires to win: the Ranji Trophy final.

The eight-time champions Karnataka will be up against first-time finalists Jammu and Kashmir in a battle of might versus grit at the KSCA Rajnagar Stadium here in Hubballi.

Karnataka have featured in 14 Ranji finals before but have not played in one over a decade. The last time they were in this territory, they buried Tamil Nadu in a mountain of first innings runs to clinch the title in 2014-15.

However, this final comes after a rebuilding phase and the one that echoes resurgence, voiced by a young crop. And a certain standout has been Smaran R.

Smaran's 950-run season has grabbed quite a bit of attention and Karnataka will hope he can break the 1280-run State record set by Vijay Bharadwaj back in the 1998-99 campaign.

Karnataka's batting riches also consist of India internationals K L Rahul (457 runs), Devdutt Padikkal (532), Mayank Agarwal (518) and Karun Nair (699), who all played significant roles in their charge to the final this season.

"We're ready and prepared for this opportunity and we have the experience to play big games. So, hopefully, our experience will come in handy," Padikkal said during the pre-match press conference.

Padikkal, who was given captaincy in the final group match of the season, has scored 417 runs since, signalling his ability to handle responsibility along with his batting.

While the spotlight will be on batting, Shreyas Gopal (46 wickets) has been a quiet yet consistent performer for Karnataka.

Having entered the elite 300-wicket club in first-class cricket recently, he is among the few batters to also have 4000 runs in red-ball cricket. Another good outing in the final may just be the fuel he needs for opportunities at higher levels. Karnataka's pace attack has collectively fired across the tournament, with Vidwath Kaverappa leading the list with 21 wickets.

While he has not been able to maintain the standards he set in the first phase of the tournament, Vidyadhar Patil (18 wickets) has been an unheralded star. With Prasidh Krishna and Vyshak Vijayakumar, Karnataka will also have variety to bank on.

On paper, Karnataka are red-hot favourites, but considering the manner in which Jammu and Kashmir have turned around a sedate start into a historic one, they can't be taken lightly.

And they certainly don't need any reminders about what is at stake. After 343 matches over six decades, they finally have a shot at the title.

But what makes J&K a formidable side and giving them an outside chance is Auqib Nabi. The 32-year-old has picked up 99 wickets in the last two seasons. They will also bank on skipper Paras Dogra's experience, who recently joined the 10,000 run-club in Ranji Trophy cricket.

However, the visitors will also be sweating on Vanshaj Sharma and Shubham Khajuria's fitness before their big day.

All in all, J&K will hope to derive confidence from the recent past and will need a miracle to stop an unstoppable force in Karnataka.

Teams (from): Karnataka: Devdutt Padikkal, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul, Karun Nair, KV Aneesh, Smaran R, Shreyas Gopal, Kruthik Krishna, Vyshak Vijaykumar, Vidyadhar Patil, Vidwath Kaverappa, Prasidh Krishna, Mohsin Khan, Shikhar Shetty, KL Shrijith
Jammu and Kashmir: Parag Dogra (c), Shubham Khajuria, Yawer Hassam Khan, Abdul Samad, Kanhaiya Wadhawan, Abid Mushtaq, Auqib Nabi, Yudhvir Singh, Vanshaj Sharma, Sunil Ram Kumar, Kawal Preet Singh, Sahil Lotra, Dikshant Kundal, Umar Nazir.

Karnataka skipper Devdutt Padikkal (right) and his Jammu & Kashmir counterpart Paras Dogra greet on the eve of the Ranji Trophy final in Hubballi on Monday. DH PHOTO/ GOVINDRAJ JAVALI

LIVE 9:30 AM, STAR SPORTS & JIOHOTSTAR

Ahead of final, a trip down memory lane of Karnataka's glory days

Karnataka last won the Ranji Trophy in the 2014-15 season when they beat Tamil Nadu in the final in Mumbai. DH FILE PHOTO

Vinay-led Karnataka had completed a double treble in 2013-14, 2014-15

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
HUBBALLI, DHNS

A decade ago, when domestic teams collected souvenirs while travelling to different parts of the country during the cricket calendar, Karnataka were picking up trophies for fun.

Vinay Kumar-led Karnataka completed a double domestic treble (Ranji Trophy, Irani Cup and Vijay Hazare Trophy) in 2013-14 and 2014-15, winning six national competitions in two seasons.

As Karnataka sit on the cusp of their ninth Ranji Trophy, their bowling coach Mansur Ali Khan, who was also with the team back then in a similar role, feels there are similarities in the current team and the one that triumphed 11 years ago.

Mansur Ali Khan

"After 1998-99, there was a drought of Ranji titles. There was motivation to win and the boys were pushing each other. We sense a bit of the same now," Mansur tells *DH*.

It is not a surprise to see Karnataka in the final. And it is no surprise to see them being tagged as favourites to win their ninth title. After their capitulation in Alur against Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka have gone about business with an air of invincibility.

And Mansur feels that security (spot in the XI) has been a very crucial factor to bring the best out of each player.

"We have been good but most importantly, it is trust and security of a spot that brings out the best in each player and that has been the difference. We saw it then when myself and JAK were there (J Arun Kumar), and we are seeing it now."

Karnataka, under Vinay's leadership, knew the art of coming good under pressure. And Mansur credited it to the hunger and desperation players had to play for India.

"At the time, Rahul (KL), Karun (Nair), Manish (Pandey) were all starting out their careers. We were very eager. There was a desperation to play for the country. And when the results came, it was brilliant. We enjoyed it as a group."

Vinay, who was the last Karnataka skipper to lift the Ranji Trophy, recalled the enduring memory and said it meant everything to the side.

"The victory meant everything to us. There was certainly a sense of fulfillment in that journey. Especially after losing that final in Mysore to Mumbai," recalls Vinay.

"It was a great moment for me as a captain and as a boy who had the dream to play for Karnataka. And then leading them to back-to-back trophies. It was special," he added.

The 42-year-old credited the coaches who created a safe environment for players to thrive in.

"The credit has to go to coach JAK and MAK. The kind of environment they have given for the players and the faith they showed."

Win tastes good

Having picked 39 wickets in 10 games in Karnataka's last title run, former pacer Abhimanyu Mithun shared similar sentiments.

"When we lost to Mumbai in 2009-10, that was a painful memory. And when we won the titles in 2013-14 and 2014-15, it felt like we had achieved something. Very little comes close to the feeling of winning," Mithun said.

Mithun also stressed on how success opened up doors for individuals, aiding to their personal growth.

"Fom there on, many went and played for India. Winning opens up a lot of opportunities and winning tastes good. And a few from this squad also have talent to go and play for India," he added.

Arsenal rout Tottenham to boost EPL title bid

LONDON, AFP: Arsenal midfielder Eberechi Eze tormented Tottenham again as his double revived the Premier League leaders' title bid in a 4-1 rout of their north London rivals on Sunday.

Mikel Arteta's side ended a damaging two-match winless run and moved five points clear of second-placed Manchester City thanks to Eze's starring role and a brace from Viktor Gyokeres.

Viktor Gyokeres (centre) celebrates scoring Arsenal's second goal during their 4-1 win over Tottenham Hotspur in London on Sunday. REUTERS

Having rejected the chance to join Tottenham in the close season, Eze has produced his best moments in an Arsenal shirt against his former suitors.

The 27-year-old scored a hat-trick when Arsenal thrashed Tottenham 4-1 in November and Arteta brought the England midfielder back into his starting line-up for the rematch despite his recent poor form.

He rewarded Arteta's faith with his first goals since his treble against Tottenham, ending a barren run that had lasted 18 games.

Eze gave Arsenal the lead in the first half at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium before Randal Kolo Muani grabbed an instant equaliser.

Gyokeres settled Arsenal's nerves immediately after the interval, Eze bagged the third and Gyokeres wrapped up a valuable victory.

After a difficult first season following his move from Sporting Lisbon, Gyokeres' goals were as cathartic for the Sweden striker as Eze's were for him.

The redemption arcs for Eze and Gyokeres couldn't have come at a better moment after Arsenal's title push had gone off the rails.

Results: Tottenham: 1 (Kolo Muani 34th) It to Arsenal: 4 (Eze 32nd, 61st, Gyokeres 47th, 90th+4).

IFL 2 likely to kick-off by the end of March

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Indian Football League 2, earlier known as I-League 2, is likely to start by the end of March as the All India Football Federation (AIFF) communicated to the eligible clubs, including SC Bengaluru and Bengaluru United, to confirm their participation.

Following a similar format to the Indian Super League's truncated season, the third-tier league is heading for a one-leg round-robin format with just 10 participants while the league toppers will take the title. Earlier, the federation wanted to merge the fourth division with IFL 2 for a 40-team event but it has been put on hold for the season.

This also means only two Bengaluru clubs will feature in the IFL 2 while FC Agniputhra are to feature in the IFL 3.

The other clubs invited are MYJ FC (Mumbai), Morning Star (TN), NEROCA (Manipur), SAT FC (Kerala), SC de Goa, United SC (WB), Delhi FC, Sudeva FC (Delhi).

Vinicius faces Benfica again after racism row

MADRID, AP

Vinicius Junior is set to face Benfica again in the Champions League, just a week after accusing their player Gianluca Prestianni of racially insulting him.

UEFA's disciplinary body, who are still investigating the alleged incident from last week's first leg, said in a statement they had "decided to provisionally suspend Mr Gianluca Prestianni for the next UEFA club competition match for which he would otherwise be eligible".

Real Madrid and Benfica will meet on Wednesday night in the second leg of the knockout round of the Champions League. Madrid won the first match in Lisbon last Tuesday with Vinicius scoring a second-half winner for a 1-0 victory.

Also missing for Benfica on Wednesday will be coach Jose Mourinho, who was sent off late in the first leg for complaining with the referee. The former Madrid coach criticised Vinícius for celebrating his goal by the Benfica flag.

Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni (right) was provisionally suspended by UEFA following his alleged racist slur to Vinicius Jr (left) in Lisbon last week. AFP

The game was halted for nearly 10 minutes after the Brazil forward scored and celebrated by the Benfica corner flag, upsetting local fans and players. After being confronted by Prestianni, Vinícius accused the Argentine player of calling him "monkey."

The anti-racism protocol was activated but no further action was taken during the match as there was no evidence against Prestianni, who covered his mouth with his shirt while talking to Vinícius. The Madrid forward was shown a yellow card after his celebration.

Inter, Juve troubles

On Tuesday, small Norwegian club Bodo/Glimt will look to keep their surprising run going when it takes a two-goal advantage for the second leg at Inter Milan.

Another Italian club that will need a comeback will be Juventus when it hosts Galatasaray on Wednesday after losing 5-2 in the first leg in Turkey.

Stride FC seal A Division title

BENGALURU, DHNS: Stride Sports FC continued their dream run in Karnataka football as the side sealed the BDFA A Division League Championship title by topping the points table with a 3-0 victory over Sniper FC at the BFS here on Monday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

A brace from Bradley Clifford Joseph (28th minute, 36th) and a goal by season's star performer Ginneithang Gangte (47th) reflected their dominance in the season as they ended with 37 points in 14 games (12 victories and a loss). This was also a back-to-back promotion for the club from the B Division.

Meanwhile, Technico FF virtually confirmed their promotion as they moved to second place again with a big 7-0 win over RWF FC. Their haul of 32 points put them three ahead of BTM FC. Both sides play their final games on Tuesday with Technico needing just a draw to move ahead.

Results: A Division: Stride FC: 3 (Bradley Clifford Joseph- 28th, 36th, Ginneithang Gangte 47th) bt Sniper FC: 0; Technico FF: 07 (Ronn Joel 3rd, Aaron Rodriguez 6th, Thang Jalen Guite 43rd, 63rd, Sansam Meitei 70th, Nathan Powell 78th, Tony Robert 85th) bt RWF FC: 0; Income Tax FC: 3 (Kevin Koshy 12th P, Sarthak Bhupal 20th, Dennis Cotter 90+4th) bt Sree Gajanana FC: 1 (B Niroshana Mani 69th)
B Division: Group B: Infinite Belagavi FC: 1(Koushik Patil 43rd) bt Karnataka Police: 0.

Mumbai put the game beyond K'taka's reach

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka's chances of reaching the elite semifinals of the Col CK Nayudu Trophy took a big hit as Mumbai piled up a mammoth 616/7 after batting the entire Day 3 in Kandivali, Maharashtra, on Monday.

Karnataka, who scored just 240 after batting first, took a heavy beating, with Abhigyan Kundu (159) and Manan Bhatt (120) hitting centuries after Ayush Jethwa added 13 runs to his overnight score of 138.

For Karnataka, Samit Dravid claimed 2/71 while skipper Aneeshwar Gautam picked 2/12.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 240 all out vs Mumbai (O/n: 310/1): 616/7 in 187 overs (Angkrish Raghuvanshi 92, Ayush Jethwa 151, Manan Bhatt 120, Abhigyan Kundu 159, Karthik Kumar 28 n.o.; Samit Dravid 2-71, Aneeshwar Gautam 2-12).

Duplantis shakes off illness to extend winning streak

CLERMONT-FERRAND (FRANCE), AFP: Armand Duplantis fought off a bout of food poisoning to stretch his near three-year pole vault winning run at the All Star Perche on Sunday, but was unable to better his world record.

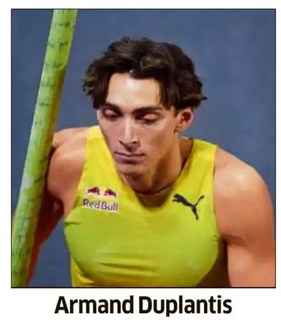
The double Olympic champion fell ill earlier in the weekend and only made a late decision to take part in Clermont-Ferrand, where he cleared 6.06 metres at the first attempt to take victory.

Duplantis won his 37th consecutive meet dating back to the summer of 2023.

Australia's Kurtis Marschall finished second (6.00m) with Greece's Emmanouil Karalis in third (5.90m).

"I'm OK. I'm scared of how I'm going to feel when the adrenaline runs off though. I'm super light. That's a good thing. You know, gravity doesn't like weight, so that's, that's an advantage," Duplantis joked.

Duplantis had three tries at breaking his latest world record set at last year's world championships, but he fell short of the bar at 6.31m.



Armand Duplantis

We've messed up on a grand scale: India asst coach

SIDNEY KIRAN
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate on Sunday admitted the team made a lot of mistakes in the 76-run defeat against South Africa in their opening Super Eights but was hopeful of turning things around in the next two games, which are must-wins if they wish to make the semifinals.

"Very disappointed in the performance. But when you set out to win a World Cup, don't expect someone to come and deliver the World Cup to you halfway through the competition. So we understand we've made a lot of mistakes tonight. We understand you're probably allowed one mess-up in this phase of the competition. And we've messed up on a grand scale," said Doeschate, known for frank assessments.

"Now the onus is on this group of guys to turn around and put in two solid performances against Zimbabwe and the West Indies. Obviously, with the way the group goes, you need at least four points to get through now, and it's going to need two big performances and a big bounce back from everyone involved."

Ryan ten Doeschate

India have an assortment of left-handed batters — six in the top eight against South Africa were southpaws — that has not only given them a unidimensional look but has allowed oppositions to field finger spinners and tie them down. In a bid to break the predictability, Doeschate hinted at bringing back Sanju Samson, who lost his place in the playing XI to Ishan Kishan owing to poor form.

"In the five outings we've had now, four teams have opened with part-time off-spin and it's got a wicket every time apart from the USA game where we lost Abhi (Abhishek Sharma) without a score in any case. So to start every innings zero for one, I think it's literally been zero or a couple of runs for one every time is obviously putting pressure on the link players."

"Tilak (Varma) and Sky (Suryakumar Yadav) have their role to link up with the guys at the back end, and it hasn't gone that way. Look, there's a lot of inexperience in the team, and you want a settled team. These guys have done it all before. They're all fantastic players. So, do you stick with it or twist? You stick with the guys who we feel have performed really well over the last 18 months and who are maybe shy of a few runs now? Or do we twist and bring Sanju, who's also a fantastic player and obviously helps tactically with having a right-hander at the top of the order, and I'm sure that'll be a talking point over the next few days going into these two very important games."

The formidable home batters have struggled on tricky surfaces

WITHOUT PLAN B, India's game unravels

SIDNEY KIRAN,
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

The unanimous opinion amongst most pundits and even the opposition teams was that India were the team to beat in the ICC T20 World Cup. The marquee event was happening in familiar home conditions, the batting line-up arrived in blazing form and the bowling attack had all the bases covered. But in a span of fortnight, the defending champions have unravelled in stunning manner and they now stand on the precipice of a massive disaster that few could have foreseen.

It's a no-brainer that the primary reason behind India's stuttering run, which got a severe jolt following the 76-run defeat against South Africa at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Sunday, is the collective batting failure. Another top-order implosion that saw India lose three wickets in the Power Play and the inability of the middle-order to script a recovery, something which David Miller and Dewald Brevis did brilliantly for South Africa through a 97-run fourth-wicket stand, cooked the hosts' goose.

In fact, that has been one of India's biggest problems this World Cup. India have lost one of the openers for a duck in four out of the five games, with Abhishek Sharma collecting three and Ishan Kishan bagging one. A key factor in India's domineering run over the last 20 months has been the smashing starts Abhishek, the No. 1 T20 batter in the world, has consistently provided.

Teams have made it open that they've come better prepared to deal with the dashing gun-slinger, saying a larger part of their planning has gone into trying to get him out. And they've done that exceptionally. So accustomed to bullying the bowlers on batting paradises, he's now the one under pressure on challenging surfaces, and he looks all at sea wondering how to cope with it. Does he hit himself out of trouble in typically aggressive fashion or bide his time and then open fire? The helplessness is clearly visible on the 25-year-old's face with every passing failure.

India have also been unable to dominate the Power Play, either losing wickets in a clutch like against the US and South Africa or unable to force the pace — an occurrence in all matches so far. Teams have studied that the Indian batting line-up that's loaded with left-handers has a problem against spin, and the likes of Tilak Varma and Suryakumar Yadav have struggled to take them on. Spinners have constantly tried to take the ball away from left-handers like Kishan, Varma and Shivam Dube, and the trio has not been able to decode the riddle.

Skipper Suryakumar, the only specialist right-handed batter in the line-up, too has come up short in dealing with spinners. The big shots that he so effortlessly employs against pacers by moving around the crease are conspicuous by their absence versus the spinners.

India have only themselves to blame for the situation they find themselves in. In the two bilateral series versus South Africa and New Zealand at home, the batters were mostly given shirtfronts, and they made a mockery of it. But at the World Cup, the pitches have been tacky, and they've found it hard to deal with. Ideally, they should have played on a variety of surfaces that would have prepared them better for such challenges, and the failure to do so is hurting them. Plus, opposition bowlers have done their homework, and on surfaces that are offering them some assistance, they've been able to tie the Indian batters down successfully.

India are now faced with a Catch-22 situation. The template on the road to the World Cup was to play fearless cricket no matter what. Now wickets are falling in a cluster at the start itself. The pitches are challenging. Do they continue with the same blueprint or adapt smartly? It's this dilemma they need to find a way to wriggle out of.

Indian batters have been unable to impose themselves as combination of tacky pitches and rival bowlers' smarts have tied them down. PTI/REUTERS

Ten Doeschate at pains to defend Axar's exclusion

SIDNEY KIRAN
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

It's not very often the vice-captain of a team is benched, especially in a clash as important as a Super Eights game of the ICC T20 World Cup. But with the Indian team, especially under the current management of head coach Gautam Gambhir, such radical decisions are not uncommon.

While Axar Patel missing out of the final Group A game against the Netherlands was to help get a returning Washington Sundar to get into the groove ahead of the bigger battles made logical sense, keeping the senior pro out of the playing XI to accommodate Tamil Nadu all-rounder against South Africa on Sunday due to 'tactical' reasons baffled many.

Sundar, a capable all-rounder, was picked primarily because his finger-spin would offset the South African left-handers, but India skipper Suryakumar Yadav used the 26-year-old only for two overs where he gave away 17 runs. Promoted to No. 5 ahead of Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube, Sundar failed with the bat too, just like the rest of his colleagues, managing 11 off 11 balls.

When asked about Axar's exclusion despite the 32-year-old's proven ability to deliver in big matches, India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate was at pains to defend it.

"We spent so much time deliberating about the XI the last couple of days. And I guess the only way that it sort of didn't play into our hands is if we did have the ideal start like we did today with getting Quinton (de Kock) and (Ryan) Rickelton out so early.

"We were kind of looking at matchups more in the middle. And then obviously, someone has to give way. So, do we leave a batter out and get another bowler in? In hindsight, that looks like the right decision. But obviously, playing it forward and making decisions at the time, we felt we needed Rinku (Singh), as an eighth batsman, so to speak. And the decision was based around there."

So is the management against Axar's inclusion in the World Cup squad, which saw then designated vice-captain Shubham Gill being dropped? Batting coach Sitanshu Kotak begged to differ. "Surya (captain Suryakumar Yadav) and Gautam both spoke to Axar about the decision (to drop him). The reason to play Washy was that they had three left-handers in the top five -- de Kock, Rickleton and David Miller -- and hence there was a feeling that an off-spinner (who takes the ball away from left-handers) should play," Kotak said.

Axar Patel

"Axar has played so much cricket that his confidence won't be dented because of this move. And as I said, the coach and captain must have clearly told him as to why they took such a call."

England, Pakistan eye crucial points

PALLEKELE, PTI

On a surface expected to assist slow bowlers, both England and Pakistan will lean heavily on their spin resources in their Super Eights clash in the T20 World Cup here on Tuesday.

England may not have hit top gear yet, but the two-time champions have found ways to win.

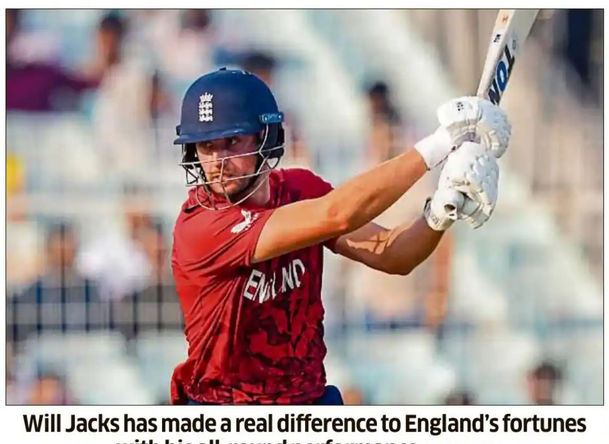
They kicked off their Super Eights campaign with a commanding 51-run victory over Sri Lanka, a result that significantly boosted their net run rate and took them to the top of the standings.

Defending a modest total against Sri Lanka, England played according to the conditions perfectly. Their spinners did the bulk of the work along with pacer Jofra Archer to trigger a dramatic Sri Lankan batting collapse.

The ever-reliable leg spinner Adil Rashid and left arm spinner Liam Dawson have combined well to get the wickets.

Meanwhile, Will Jacks has emerged as an unlikely match-winner. His off-spin has been handy, but it is his contributions with the bat, 39 against Nepal, 16 against Scotland and 53 versus Italy, that have repeatedly bailed England out of trouble.

Opener Phil Salt returned to form with a match-winning knock against Sri Lanka, as he batted beyond the powerplay for the first time in the tournament.


Will Jacks has made a real difference to England's fortunes with his all-round performance. REUTERS

LIVE 7 PM, STAR SPORTS

However, Jos Buttler's form remains a concern. But the veteran batter has got the backing of his captain Harry Brook, who himself is yet to find runs.

England also hold the advantage of familiarity with the venue, having swept a three-match T20I series here 3-0 earlier this month and also winning the Super Eight game against Lanka.

Pakistan, in contrast, were left frustrated after their Super Eights opener against New Zealand was washed out, leaving them with just one point and little room for error.

The Men in Green will bank on their varied spin arsenal on a track that traditionally slows as the match progresses.

Alongside the mystery spin of Usman Tariq, Pakistan boast of depth in Saim Ayub, Abrar Ahmed, Shadab Khan and Mohammad Nawaz, a collective that could prove crucial in stifling England's batting line-up.

However, Pakistan's own batting inconsistency remains a concern, especially against quality spin.

While opener Sahibzada Farhan, who is the leading run scorer of the tournament with 220 runs from four innings, has done well, the likes of Saim Ayub and captain Salman Agha are yet to fire.

SUPER 8s GROUP 2

Teams	P	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
England	1	1	0	0	2	2.55
Pakistan	1	0	0	1	1	0.00
New Zealand	1	0	0	1	1	0.00
Sri Lanka	1	0	1	0	0	-2.55

'Not in our hands'

Pakistan opener Farhan, meanwhile side-stepped queries on the speculation that players of his country would be ignored by at least four Indian-owned franchises in the 'The Hundred' auction, saying that the matter is beyond their control.

Manchester Super Giants (RPSG Group), MI London (Reliance), Southern Brave (GMR) and Sunrisers Leeds (Sun Group) are linked to team owners in the IPL and according reports in the British media, all of them would avoid Pakistani players.

"See, it's not in our hands to decide who will pick us or not. That is not in our hands. Wherever we get a chance, who are interested can pick us and we are ready to play in that league," Farhan said ahead of his team's match against England here on Tuesday.

"And we are not interested to play with the people - the way you have spoken," said Farhan when asked about Pakistan players not being picked in franchise leagues around the world with strong IPL ties.

Hetmyer's 34-ball carnage crushes Zimbabwe, makes India's job difficult

MUMBAI, PTI

A rampant West Indies pulverised Zimbabwe by 107 runs in a one-sided T20 World Cup Super Eights match after Shimron Hetmyer and Rovman Powell's brutal onslaught propelled them to the second-highest total in the tournament's history here on Monday.

The West Indies meant business on a flat deck to clatter 19 sixes and 16 fours in all, amassing 254/6 on the back of Hetmyer's 34-ball 85 and Powell's 35-ball 59.

West Indies' big win, coupled with their heavy defeat to South Africa on Sunday, has made India's task of qualifying for the semifinal a difficult proposition. India should now beat both West Indies and Zimbabwe and hope South Africa beat the Caribbeans.

The Caribbean side narrowly missed Sri Lanka's record total of 260/6 set against Ireland in the inaugural edition of the competition in 2007.

In their reply, a battered Zimbabwe crumbled in the face of an imposing target and the contest was sealed as early as in the third over, when Akeal Hosein (3/28) returned with a rare double-wicket maiden.

The slide began when Zimbabwe's best batter in the tournament Brian Bennett (5) was cleaned up by Hosein, and they had lost opener Tadiwanashe Marumani (14) to Matthew Forde, caught by Hetmyer.

Hetmyer had more catching to do when Ryan Burl (0) hit one straight to mid-wicket off Hosein, which left Zimbabwe reeling at 20/3 inside three overs. Gudakesh Motie (4/28) then struck twice in as many balls to leave Zimbabwe gasping in the 11th over, and the African side eventually rolled over for 147 in 17.4 overs.

West Indies' Shimron Hetmyer plays a shot during his 34-ball 85 knock against Zimbabwe during their Super Eights match of the T20 World Cup in Mumbai on Monday. PTI

SUPER 8s GROUP 1

Teams	P	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
West Indies	1	1	0	0	2	5.35
South Africa	1	1	0	0	2	3.80
India	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**-3.80**
Zimbabwe	1	0	1	0	0	-5.35

Brief scores: West Indies: 254/6 in 20 overs (Shimron Hetmyer 85, Rovman Powell 59, Sherfane Rutherford 31 n.o.; Richard Ngarava 2-47, Blessing Muzarabani 2-42) bt Zimbabwe: 147 all out in 17.4 overs (Dion Myers 28, Sikandar Raza 27, Brad Evans 43; Akeal Hosein 3-28, Gudakesh Motie 4-28). **Result:** WI won by 107 runs. **PoM:** Shimron Hetmyer.

India needed to get rid of their ego: Gavaskar

AHMEDABAD, PTI: India needed to take a cue from South Africa's innings, shed their ego and adapt to the conditions instead of walking out with overconfidence and throwing their bats at everything in their T20 World Cup clash, feels batting legend Sunil Gavaskar.

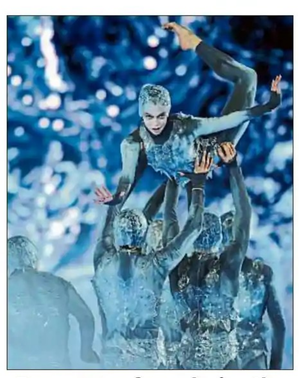
South Africa snapped India's 12-match unbeaten streak at the T20 World Cup.

"Having seen how Brevis and Miller built their partnership, that was the approach needed from the Indian batters," Gavaskar said on JioStar.

"The Indian batters did not do that. They came out with overconfidence, threw their bat at everything and lost wickets. South Africa clearly outsmarted India and it was a well-deserved win for them."

India produced a below-par batting effort, repeatedly losing wickets to be bowled out for 111 in 18.5 overs.

"India did not take notes from South Africa's innings. They came out and threw their bat at every delivery hoping for a boundary. That is not how you play T20 cricket. You have to learn from the opposition. If they have scored well on a tricky surface like this, you have to get rid of your ego, observe and adjust."


Dancers perform during the Winter Olympics' closing ceremony in Verona. AFP

Hosts Italy dominate as Winter Games conclude

VERONA (ITALY), AP

The Milan Cortina Olympics ended as the twin flames in co-host cities Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo were extinguished during a closing ceremony inside the ancient Verona Arena, roughly mid-distance between the far-flung mountain, valley and city venues that made these the most spread-out Winter Games ever.

The next Winter Games will be held in neighboring France, which received the Olympic flag in the official handover earlier in the ceremony. Following the same spread-out model, the 2030 Winter Games will stage events in the Alps and Nice, on the Mediterranean Sea.

A total of 116 medal events were held in eight Olympic sports across 16 disciplines, including the debut of ski mountaineering this year, over the course of 17 days of competition. With the final events wrapping up just hours before the ceremony, the 50km mass start men's and women's cross country medals were awarded.

Host Italy won its highest Winter Olympic tally ever with 30 medals - 10 gold, six silver and 14 bronze, crushing the previous record of 20 set at the Lillehammer Olympics in 1994.

USA win ice hockey gold

The United States won the men's Olympic ice hockey gold for the first time in 46 years by beating Canada 2-1 on Sunday, reports AFP from Milan.

Jack Hughes struck in overtime to hand the US their first Olympic title since the 1980 'Miracle on Ice' win over the Soviet Union. The goal deprived Canada of a record 10th Olympic title.

Finland, the champions in Beijing four years ago, won the bronze medal on Saturday by thrashing Slovakia 6-1.

After T20I high, India eye ODI success over Aus

BRISBANE, PTI: Having secured a stunning T20I series triumph, reigning world champions India will have the psychological edge when they take on Australia in the first women's ODI of a three-match series here on Tuesday.

India had beaten Australia in the World Cup semifinal last year in Navi Mumbai and the hosts would be looking to avenge that stunning defeat.

What makes the series even more significant is the fact that one of Australia's greatest players, Alyssa Healy, will be making her swansong ODI appearance in this rubber. She will be ending her illustrious career after the one-off Test against India starting on March 6 in Perth.

Harleen Deol

Healy will return to lead Australia after missing the three-match T20I series which India clinched 2-1 after winning the decider by 17 runs in Adelaide on Saturday. It was Australia's first bilateral series defeat since 2017.

Star leg-spinner Alana King is also coming to the ODI and Test sides.

For India, Kashvee Gautam, Harleen Deol and Pratika Rawal will come in to replace of Arundhati Reddy, Bharti Fulmali, and Shreyanka Patil.

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